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CURRENT COMMENT.

It is a pretty lucky thing that in this land of freedom we have arrangements whereby we can keep one of the Presidential candidates in jail; otherwise the campaign would unavoidably get a little flavour of reality. Brother Eugene Debs issues statements from the Atlanta Penitentiary that really sound like human talk and verge dangerously close to matters that people have an interest in. If he were free to go up and down the country, introducing these subjects to popular attention, he might impair the decorous dullness of the campaign; so probably it is for the interest of the Larger Good that he should remain hived up. It must be hard for Messrs. Cox and Harding, however, as good sports, to see it in this way. What decent sport would want to be President when an opposition candidate was under the handicap of being in jail? It was too much for Brother Christensen, and he tried his best to get up some sort of gentlemen's agreement for 'Gene's release, so that he could start at scratch with the rest of them. Brothers Cox and Harding, however, manfully kept their eyes on the Larger Good, and refused to join in, which was really an act of self-abnegation almost amounting to heroism, for we all know how dear the ideals of good sportsmanship are to Ohio's favourite sons, and how repugnant it would be to them to profit by any kind of unclean and indecent personal advantage.

THERE is much to be said against Brother Debs, on the other hand, on the score of good manners. For instance, he does not see a prospect of significant change in the conditions of the country until the doctrine of property is revised. He calls attention to the situation of his native town, by way of example. Terre Haute is built over a coal deposit, is surrounded by coal; and yet, 'Gene says, it is impossible to get coal there because a few owners have taken possession of the mines. "The miners are at their mercy and can not dig the coal even to keep themselves warm unless the mine-owners give them permission." All this is true enough, and might perhaps properly be discussed in the proper place, provided one were decorous about it and did not go too far. But it is shocking bad manners and downright vulgarity to try to inject a consideration like that into an orthodox Republican and Democratic, bi-partisan, Punch-and-Judy campaign, instead of talking about the League of Na-

tions or the opposition's slush fund. We hate to criticize 'Gene, but he is behaving very rudely, as rudely as any of the ill-mannered old Hebrew prophets who were death on privileged land-grabbers. We hope he will change his tune and come out, as a candidate should, with some nice platitudinous talk about something that does not mean anything in particular, and keep to it, so that the high moral tone of the campaign may not be further impaired by his indiscretions.

WE urge this line of conduct upon 'Gene especially in view of his influence upon his followers who dwell in the legislative districts up in the Bronx which sent the five Socialists, subsequently ousted, to the last Assembly at Albany. There is great danger that the Socialists in these districts may take their cue from 'Gene and talk about coal and transportation and Mr. Baker's underhand assistance to Poland and similar matters. True, the Bronx County Chairman of the American Legion expects to have out several hundred of his janizaries to keep a watchful eye on the Socialist meetings, and is reported as declaring that anything construed as disloyalty will be summarily dealt with; and if the Socialists grow "vituperative" he proposes to furnish 5000 men to curb them. This is all very well and quite to be expected from the American Legion which is rapidly succeeding the press as the sentinel of our liberties—it is wonderful what six months in an army will do for one's notion of liberty, particularly one's own liberty to do as one pleases without regard to law, decency, or any of the sanctions that mere civilians are apt, more or less, to respect. Still, one hates a beastly row; it messes up things, and is wholly unnecessary if the Socialists will only refrain from baiting the Legion with the kind of talk that Comrade 'Gene is handing out from Atlanta.

CHICHERIN, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, said some time ago that the reports of Russian disaster, given out from Warsaw and Paris, were mere fables. Kamenev also remarked the other day that the effective force of the Soviet army was unimpaired. There are two facts that render these statements antecedently probable. First, that Chicherin has established a rather remarkable record as the first Foreign Minister in modern history who ever told the truth when he could possibly help it. We have read a great many of his statements and remarked this quality with interest. It is fair to say, at least, that if he has done any lying worth mentioning, he has not yet been caught at it. Second, the Foreign Offices and governmental publicity-bureaux of Paris and Warsaw were almost never known to tell the truth under any circumstances whatever. Now it appears from a London dispatch that General Budenny's army, which Warsaw reported last week as annihilated in the Lemberg sector, is still doing business at the old stand. One saves trouble by simply passing over the accounts of these great splurges and waiting for time to true them up, as it always does. If our four years experience with the war has taught us nothing else, it should at least have taught us that.

OUR old friend Paderewski has raised up the German bogey again. He has issued an impassioned plea from Paris that the Allies send in an army to make a clean-up of bolshevism in Russia, which ought not to be a

difficult matter because "Lenin and Trotsky are bluffing" and the Soviet armies only amount to two or three hundred thousand men. But it is "the last quarter of an hour" available for such action, because Germany unbeaten, defiant and generally devilish, is cunningly biding her time, and when bolshevism collapses, leaving Russia exhausted in spirit and reactionary in temper, she will go in and organize the greatest and most formidable empire—and so forth and so on. Berlin has the plans for this all drawn up, charted and cross-indexed, ready to pull out on a moment's notice. Mr. Paderewski does not say how all this is to be done, presumably because he is not in the confidence of Berlin and has not gone over the plans; but in talking about it he shows all the old fire of the virtuoso. An indurated world, however—especially on this hemisphere—will have its doubts; we have seen the German bogey before. There will undoubtedly be a good, firm, workable set of relations established between Russia and Germany; in fact, they are already forming. But they do not forecast at all the kind of thing in our view that Mr. Paderewski suspects, or says he suspects, for we think, if we may say so, that his real suspicions are quite in line with ours.

How times can change in two years! That we should ever live to see the day when a respectable American editor would say that Lloyd George was extremely impudent in reminding President Wilson that his present attitude to Russia does not accord with that which he assumed at the time the Prinkipo conference was discussed! Then to go on and remind the British Prime Minister of his own numerous inconsistencies is very unfriendly, we think, when all this while he is away in quiet Lucerne, taking a rest from his labours of having won the war. It is a dangerous precedent; and since President Wilson's unguarded remark about the military ambitions of the French Prime Minister, there has been nothing in all the quarrels of the Allies so unfortunate. It is all very well for Allied rulers to blackguard one another to their hearts' content, while they are saving civilization, but it is by no means the proper thing for editors to imitate them. America has a reputation to keep up, a journalistic reputation, a reputation for compliant, decorous, cautious conduct, and if this sort of thing is permitted to go on, we may become no better than the editors of the European gutter-press. What would Lord Northcliffe say, if he were to read in an editorial of a respectable American paper some ribald remark thrown at Lloyd George for not hanging the Kaiser according to his election pledge? It is exceedingly dangerous for our editors to consider the subject of the consistency of Allied policy. The inconsistencies of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George alone afford American editors opportunities and material enough to keep them busy for the rest of their lives.

THE news-columns of the daily press can sometimes be interpreted pretty well through the finance-columns. In these latter, too, there frequently creep in statements that in view of the news-dispatches in the same issue, seem naïve. Experienced newspaper-readers always devote careful attention to the finance-columns, whether they have any special interest in finance or not. It was quite interesting to note that the great rally of the Poles and their counter-attack upon the Russian troops did not cause the financial market to turn a hair; notwithstanding everyone was saying that the drop in European exchange was due to the Polish crisis. Exchange kept dropping when the Poles were chasing the Russians, just as it did when the Russians were threatening Warsaw.

THEN we noticed too, that while one of our papers was publishing on its front page a statement from M. Parmentier and others that France would be promptly at the cashier's wicket when October came around and her loan fell due, a cautious investor wrote in inquiring whether the finance-editor thought French francs for speculation

would be a sound purchase. The editor said in reply that so much depended on France's ability to overcome the adverse balance of trade that it was hard to tell how francs would go. "To be sure," he said, "it has been announced that France's share of the Anglo-French loan will be paid at maturity, yet France is said to be negotiating for another loan." He ends with the highly illuminating observation, "Our only reason for purchasing francs would be because they are so low that perhaps cheapness would recommend them."

Is not this Irish business getting down pretty well towards the point of diminishing returns? The hunger-strike of the Lord Mayor of Cork, and its attendant circumstances, seem to be making the British supremacy cost more than it comes to. The King himself is said to have been willing to pardon the Lord Mayor, but the statement is not authorized. His Majesty let it be known however, that if he did release the prisoner, it would be against the advice of his Ministers, and they would probably resign. From this distance one can imagine a deal worse catastrophe than that. If King George would let them all resign and then patiently neglect to fill their places, His Imperial Dominions would probably see a season of unexampled peace and prosperity. The Irish imbroglio is making a mess all over the world. A good deal of French opinion is beginning, now that the Entente has fallen apart, to express open sympathy with the Irish and to speak in plain terms of the British policy towards them. England would find herself a good deal ahead by loosing Ireland from the Empire, were it only as a handy means of ridding herself of the Lloyd-George-Carson-Churchill incubus; somewhat as Artemus Ward said it would have been ten dollars in Jefferson Davis's pocket if he had never been born.

THE plea made by the British Government, and its diligent echoes and fautors in this country, that Irish concerns are a purely municipal affair which outsiders should neither criticize nor meddle with, seems to us devoid of foundation. Not to speak of other lands, the Irish situation is raising the very old Harry all over this country, and is a perfect nuisance. It has started the first political strike of any consequence that we have ever had; at the time of writing this item, longshoremen are striking British ships all up and down the Atlantic seaboard. This plays hob with business, loses us money and engenders bad temper. There is unceasing Irish agitation in most of our cities, pickets stalk to and fro in Washington, and the disposition of our people is exacerbated and stirred up. Under these circumstances, it seems to us that we and all other peoples similarly situated, have a well-earned right to criticize Irish-British relations as much as we please and in whatever fashion we please.

WHEN Tennessee ratified the Nineteenth Amendment, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association, immediately sent word to the 26,883,566 women voters that they should join with one of the two old-line parties. In a recent magazine-article, Mrs. Catt elaborated this idea by stating that the only way to get things in this country is to get them on the inside of the political parties; so all that the women have to do is to decide just what legislation they want, to understand the two parties by reading both Republican and Democratic newspapers, and then to join and try to manipulate the party most likely to give them what they want.

SOME State-enfranchised women have already tried this plan of Mrs. Catt's, and find that they can not really get even the small measures that look toward what they eventually want, through political parties or politics. For instance, in Illinois some women have found that there is a power bigger than politics; it controls the newspapers, of which the suffrage-leaders ask our women to become pious students, and it nullifies at pleasure the laws passed

by the legislature. These women have felt that what most women want through legislation is not much different from what most men desire; it boils down, finally, to an opportunity for developing, as highly as possible, the various capabilities of the individual. So, as a starter, they decided that a child-labour bill would be a good thing. When the newspapers were asked for publicity, it was discovered that none of them would support a child-labour bill which included a clause for the suppression of the ten-year-old newspaper-vender. However, with the street-trading clause left out, one of the best child-labour laws in the Union was finally passed by the State legislature; but all the same when the big employers were faced with a labour-shortage, they began to employ an increasing number of children, and continue undisturbed, so that to-day in Chicago alone there are 28,000 children at work, 4000 more than have ever been simultaneously employed in the city before.

THIS experience suggested to these women that there is a strong, small group whose "economic necessity" is the determining factor in the life of the State, and that its preponderance can not be disturbed much by "political action" of whatever kind. That a similar experience awaits women in their national venture is somehow suggested by Mrs. Catt, when she says that after the women penetrate the "penumbra and umbra" of the political parties, they will "find the real thing in the centre with the door locked tight, and after a long, hard fight they may get inside and see what moves the wheels of the party." If the women are really set on getting any social improvement worth having they will have to decide whether they can obtain it by associating in economic action towards a new control of production and distribution, or whether they can get it by joining with the two great parties, entering the last locked door, getting legislative ideas accepted, and then watching the strong small group make the wheels of nullification go round.

MEANWHILE a "handful of women" the other day visited the wharves in New York and considerably handicapped the shipping of the country, for no reason but that the British Government thinks England is a better place of residence for Dr. Mannix than Ireland. Another "handful of women," American women, called a strike of sailors and firemen and longshoremen because they objected to the British Government keeping the Lord Mayor of Cork under lock and key in Brixton jail, where he is undergoing a hunger strike. This ought to disturb the impression that government is all-powerful and that when it wants to restrain archbishops, it can do so without let or hindrance. It should also somewhat shake the prestige of the institution of "force, force without stint or limit." Not so long ago we were treated to the spectacle of certain Governments being held up from shipping munitions to Poland, by the action of European sailors, firemen, and longshoremen in declining to move military supplies. All this has value, as we have often said, in demonstrating where power really lies. The people who call strikes of this kind, and the strikers who respond to the call, must in time see how utterly anomalous their position is. They are assuming power over force, and that is against all political theory. They must see before long that when the governed govern and deprive force of its effectiveness, government is reduced to an absurdity.

THE situation that has arisen, however, is certainly worth watching, for it may be found in this struggle that economic power can after all control political force. This is not according to the modern theory of government; though students of history may remind us that this is not the first time in the evolution of man that political government has been subjected to effective pressure of this kind. But we were getting so used to the idea that the past was past, that old-established principles were as dead as a fossil fish, that progress and civilization (no matter

how much they may conflict at times) had established new laws and new principles. Now to find that these new laws and principles can be overthrown by having recourse to very ancient and very simple methods, leaves us in doubt of their solidity; and if there is to be a serious struggle between economic power and political force, the contest will be worth watching. If political government can not govern, one would say that its little game is up.

THIS demonstration, then, on the part of a "handful of women" a day or two after Secretary Colby signed the ratification for the Federal Suffrage Amendment, may forecast a realization in the minds of the gentler sex, that their persuasive powers, exerted in behalf of a good cause, needs no ballot. The exercise of the franchise is after all a sterile and tedious process when substantial reform is desired. If women are to get their way by short-cuts, short-cuts of the kind that lately put a check on the mercantile marine, then one can not help but wonder why they have been working for forty years for the vote. Why a vote, when a few remarks to a crew of transport-workers will get immediate results, with no thanks to politicians? Who would spend fifteen million dollars in a slush-fund to fill the resounding vacancy at the White House, when a "handful of women," by reviving the good old English custom of "grievance before supply" can do such effective work in so short a time, and at practically no expense?

CONSIDER the Antwerpian docker, how swift and how cheap. British shipping-interests have been shaking a reproving finger at British dockers, and have protested that their idleness and discontent are strangling British shipping. Antwerp dockers, it appears, can unload a 1,400 ton ship in the same time as London dockers do a 350 ton ship, and for just one-half the cost. This sort of thing is in line with the well-known "patriotic necessity" plea that wages should be kept down for the good of the country. The country, so labour is told, will lose trade unless the workers are willing to labour as hard for as little as the workers of other countries. "Look at American labour," say British employers to their workers. "Reflect that the speed of the American workman makes one man do the work of two at the price of one and a half." And American employers in their turn bid their workers to meditate on the wonderful little Jap, his bowl of rice, and his few cents a day. But British dockers have lately found an effective answer to this plea of "patriotic necessity." "It is indeed a patriotic necessity to keep trade," says the British docker, "and in order that employees in countries where labour is cheap can not undercut employers in Britain where labour is high, we are going to make wages higher everywhere." So the transport workers under Ben Tillett formally notified Norwegian dockers that their low wages were endangering the pay of their British fellow-workers, and unless a raise was obtained—and it was obtained quite promptly, by the way—British dockers must refuse to unload ships freighted in Norway. Also these same transport-workers sent word to a Liverpool lumber-merchant that his boats loaded by "scab" negroes on the Mississippi would lie untouched by British dockers on the Mersey. Which is all very productive of thought.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

CONSIDER THE STATE.

ONE could write a book, and a good book too, about the nature of the State, with no other documents for reference than the Paris, London, and New York dailies published during the last few months. An excellent book on the State is indeed already in existence, Franz Oppenheimer's little classic, but it could be brought down to date and ridden of some of its scholarly mustiness by a painstaking assortment of contemporary facts and actions. Current political theory has been a sort of charade in which the States, as the principal actors, were going through a vivid pantomime of pillage and murder, and the political thinkers in the audience were eagerly guessing that the pillage and murder stood for the "good of the community," the "larger life of humanity," and "the preservation of the cultural heritage," instead of seeing that the actors had nothing whatever in their mind beyond the usual routine of the day's work.

In the early part of the Middle Ages the reality of the State was the camp and the court; nowadays it is the bureaucracy and the barracks. The palming off of these institutions as the guardians of the community's welfare is one of the neatest practical jokes that ever took advantage of our human good nature and love of make-believe. The worst of it is that the gentlemen in the barracks and the bureaux don't really have to take as much pains in foisting their little joke as their success would seem to call for. There are a host of people in the court, the camp, and the university, to quote, not for the first time, Blake's words, who would "forever depress mental and prolong corporeal war," and to this old gang are added to-day a regiment of home volunteers, as it were, who have nothing whatever to gain by the mischief and who yet lend themselves freely to the business of State myth-making by which the whole community comes at last to regard the State as the be-all and end-all of its existence.

A little while back when the French cabinet slipped the joker about Wrangel among the diplomatic cards that were already lying on the table the British liberals hailed with joy the breach that had been opened. It had been obvious for a long time that the interests of the two States did not coincide, and it was about as easy to hide that fact under the press reports of the official confabs as it is to hide the actions of the Department of Justice under one of the President's speeches. It is bootless to point out that this was not a split on policy, because there had never been any policy: both States had been tacking back and forth in an effort to catch the wind, and their lack of success had put both of them in the doldrums. Did the liberals regard the conflict between the French and British Governments as an evidence of the State's naturally vicious constitution? Not a bit of it. They began industriously—and of course quite gratuitously—to build up a graceful myth to adorn British policy in the present crisis and they discovered that there were "certain fundamental incompatibilities" between the French and English temperaments which did not exist, lo! and behold!, between the English and the Italians.

Now there's a pretty sample of the way in which fictitious animosities and friendships are worked up between communities when it suits the purpose of the State to have one or the other animus prevail. The qualities that made the French community beloved during the war still exist: French thought is clear and French wine is stimulating and French courtesy is

pleasing; but it is not in the "interests of State" that these particular virtues should be dwelt upon at present and it is much more to the point that journalists and politicians should discover a similar and corresponding set of virtues in the Italian people—as no doubt they might, with a little fineness of sympathy and a stretch of the imagination, in any other human community. This affinity for other peoples is always present, for it is a spiritual affinity, and the folk in Bombay and Buenos Aires who pine for Mary Pickford are members of a community much greater and larger than any ancient empire, if only their respective States would so let them be.

As for illustrations of the source of power in the modern State, it would be impossible to exhaust the list in a couple of columns. Classic examples are cropping up every day. Read the London *Times'* report of Mr. Lloyd George's speech in the Commons on 16 August with particular reference to the dreadful Council of Action which caused, according to Brother George, such a shiver of fear to run up and down the spine of the British people, and try in this connexion to locate the particular spine which recorded the tremor almost in direct view of the public. Incidentally, note the reply to one Pemberton Billing, who asked the Prime Minister never, never, never to have any dealings or doings with the tyrannous, unconstitutional, and usurpatory Council of Action. Search the pages of Hansard carefully for a description of Mr. George solemnly raising his right hand and, amid the cheers of the Coalition majority, giving his promise never, never, never to lend an ear to the Council of Action. Examine the pages of the weeklies for a photograph of Mr. George performing this historic act. If both these lines of investigation are unsuccessful you may assume that the *Times'* report omitted nothing essential and that when Brother George shook his head negatively he meant that in spite of the shivers and the unconstitutionality it might be necessary and even convenient to receive a deputation from the Council of Action in future. Try by graphic methods to allocate the balance of power between the seventeenth-century mansion at 10 Downing Street and the dowdy early-Victorian residence in Eccleston Square where labour's Council of Action was sitting. Expressing the result of the first equation in tons, attempt to estimate the power held by the two great and ancient Houses of Parliament, expressed in ounces. And so on. What is the good of trying to swallow all the bran from Hobbes to Hegel, when the buckwheat cakes of political theory come hot off the griddle in the morning paper?

A SPORTING PROPOSITION.

LAST week we said a few words in praise of William Marion Reedy as an economist, quoting from his last writings some lines that illustrate his method, and implying a contrast between that method and the method of the liberal. By a curious coincidence, our good neighbour the *Nation*, came out the same day with an editorial article which precisely established that contrast. The *Nation* is, and has been for rather more than half a century, our representative liberal paper; it has maintained that character unvaryingly, always with considerable ability and occasionally with some distinction, and has reason to be proud of its achievement. It may be trusted to say everything that can be said on any public question from the liberal point of view, and to say it well.

Last week it spoke about the problem of housing, drawing a very disturbing picture of conditions like-

ly to prevail in our large cities this winter, and producing statistics that certainly warrant anxiety. The *Nation* first shows that there are not houses enough, then shows why there are not houses enough, then shows what this situation means in terms of public health, welfare, decency and safety. Then it inquires what the Government is doing about it, somewhat by way of a rhetorical question, apparently, since the Government is doing nothing about it or about anything else that is useful, according to its regular and permanent habit. Then the editor suggests, as an emergency-measure, that the municipal authorities in every city where a housing-shortage exists should confiscate all the unoccupied houses, fix a fair rental and turn the homeless people into them. "In a crisis such as now confronts us," the editorial says, "no man has a moral right to close the doors of a building which he does not use. . . . It will need a robust Mayor and city Government thus to take the law into their own hands: but the people would support them. . . . The emergency is as great, and calls for as prompt and energetic action, as any that could arise out of a war."

Just about; and we quite agree that a people familiarized with the doctrine of military necessity—on the right side, of course, and always understanding that Bethmann-Hollweg and von Bissing are exceptions, and Lenin also, certainly Lenin—are not likely to make much fuss over a small matter like stealing a few houses. Still, it is hard to see how this measure of military necessity would encourage further building—rather the other way, we should think, as a choice of investments. There must sometime be some further building done unless the homeless brethren, like the cuckoos, are to camp down indefinitely in their commandeered quarters and exercise a kind of squatter sovereignty. But it is not our purpose to criticize here the practical details of this proposal or its probable consequences. We are philosophically on the other side of the fence from the *Nation*, which makes our position delicate; and beside, we have so much respect for our contemporary's sincerity that we hate to look too closely at anything it may say. Its general doctrine of property, however, ought to be able to stand a question or two, if asked with urbanity, because it is standard liberal doctrine.

Houses can be built nowhere but on land; and about forty-five per cent of the superficial area of New York City is vacant land. If a man has, in a crisis like this, no moral right to close the doors of a building which he does not use, what better moral right has he to close land which he does not use against the access of those who wish to use it? The dyed-in-the-wool liberal never raises this question; yet it seems to us that the question might be raised even upon the regular liberal assumption that property in land-value is property in the same sense as property in a house or a suit of clothes, or any other product resulting from the application of labour to natural resources.

It is precisely this assumption, however, that is called into question by a perusal of the *Nation's* editorial. A house, being the product of labour, is by nature private property, as much so as the coat on one's back. Hence we think that the *Nation* would have trouble to prove that it is not the moral right of a house-owner to close his house under any circumstances whatever. Land, on the other hand, is not the product of labour, and its social value is therefore as much by nature public property as the use of the air one breathes; and the *Nation* would have no trouble at all to prove that in closing access to land, by

appropriating its economic rent, the landowner does something which he has no moral right to do. Indeed, the *Nation* would not have to waste any effort of its own in this undertaking; it could scissor the proof right out of Mill, Thomas Jefferson, Herbert Spencer, or any one of a dozen equally eminent, and save depreciation. But our liberal friends never do even this.

Their oversight lands them, moreover, in what seems to us a curious kind of morality. The *Nation* is as moral a paper as ever Mrs. Grundy could want to have in the house—honestly and sincerely moral, according to its lights. Liberal papers are for the most part, rather insistently, one might say almost aggressively, moral. Yet here the *Nation* fails to make even an *obiter dictum* of the very important moral distinction between property in land-value and property in the product of labour; while moreover, under the plea of military necessity, it advocates the taking-over of houses by the city authorities. Thus it advocates the public appropriation of what is absolutely private property while at the same time it tacitly condones the private appropriation of public property. Let the public, it says in effect, steal the houses and keep them indefinitely, and we will say nothing about the private theft of land-values.

This may be good morals, but in the hardness of our head or heart, we can not see it. In the present instance, the *Nation* may say that it is not worth while to talk about the public resumption of economic rent, because if it were done now overnight, the October migrants would not be much helped. This is true; but our esteemed contemporary never *has* talked about it, nor have any papers, philosophers, economists or public speakers of the liberal ilk. You simply can not blast a word out of any of them pro or con the difference, or the faint suggestion of a difference, or the remotest possibility of a difference between private property in land-values and private property in the products of labour. Yet there can be little doubt that this question has a deal to do with the problem of housing. If it appears to anyone a matter of such indifference as the attitude of the liberals indicates, just try it on the landlord!—just mention it to him and see what he says. The *Nation* has had fifty-five years to say *something* on the subject, and if it had begun even half that many years ago, there might be no housing-problem now, and the plea of military necessity be not needed.

Much more than for legislation or for any number of Mayor's Commissions, by way of real help in getting this problem solved, we are for public discussion of the philosophy and implications of the *Nation's* editorial. The editor of the *Nation* is an accomplished public speaker—why not debate it? This would be most useful and attract a lot of attention to the subject and be great fun besides. We would try to scratch up some sort of a speaker satisfactory to the editor of the *Nation*, and he could choose the judges and invite the whole audience—maybe including a few, just a dozen or so, of our particular friends, on the understanding that they should be quiet and not heckle—and His Honour Mayor Hylan himself could be asked to preside, and the losers could pay for the hall. This is not a challenge, only a sort of vagrant sporting proposition. Why not? Public affairs are deadly dull, the Presidential campaign is squalid beyond endurance, and we all need something to wake us up. A nice lively debate on housing, staged now, with October coming on and no place to go and the moving-men all on strike, seems to us to be just the

thing. Then the editor of the *Nation* could expound his house-smouching proposal by word of mouth and back it up with the good old liberal doctrine of military necessity under which, by the way, the liberals got us into the war, and then our spokesman could criticize it from the standpoint of economics and morals, somewhat on the line of this little sketch, perhaps, and it would all be between friends and no hard feelings. We think it would be no end interesting, and might help out the understanding of the housing-problem, probably, as much as anything could.

A STUDY IN DOCILITY.

THE articles on America and Americans by Mr. Henry W. Nevinson, which have appeared originally in the *London Nation* and the *Manchester Guardian* and have subsequently been reprinted in some of our newspapers and magazines, are both illuminating and good-tempered—a grateful combination, for it must be really difficult for the intelligent and perceiving foreigner to survey our contemporary civilization without becoming angry. But Mr. Nevinson, with an alert eye for our weaknesses, contrives to keep urbane and well-disposed. It is easy to see that the author has had many of his pre-conceptions destroyed by the facts of our life as he saw them, some pre-conceptions quite amiable and others obviously less so. He seems frankly surprised and pleased at our inveterate good-nature and easy-going ways—surprised, also, although not so pleasantly, at our terror of public opinion and docility before the ukases of our irresponsible government. He finds it difficult to understand the fetish we make of our antiquated Constitution, and our deep fear of any fundamental change. We do not challenge authority, he says; we accept it in any of its forms with almost child-like patience; a heritage, he suspects, from the severity of our Puritan forebears. For the most part Mr. Nevinson's observations are just and shrewd, if also, in our opinion, a trifle too kindly and tolerant; and we can with a clear conscience recommend a reading of them to all who wish to know the cultured outsider's reaction to our contemporary American social life.

But the explanation Mr. Nevinson makes of our docility, while true enough as far as it goes, seems to us somewhat inadequate. Further, it is only one side of the medal, so to speak, for our docility, undoubtedly our worst fault, is the inevitable accompaniment of our lack of class-consciousness or caste-feeling, which, in its turn, is unquestionably our greatest strength. Now this lack of class-consciousness is derived not so much from Puritanism *per se* as from the whole pioneer tradition. Social distinctions can not in a pioneer country have the rigidity or importance they invariably have in any old and long-settled country. When everyone was engaged in the great adventure of exploiting the natural resources of a virgin continent, when economic opportunity lay to anybody's properly acquisitive hand; when for many years the fact—and not the myth, as it is to-day—of free land created an almost irresistible *Drang nach Westen*; when a fortune could still be made and lost in a week; when capital was fluid rather than concentrated; when finance and business had more the aspects of a game than a serious profession—with such a pioneer background, many aspects of it continuing even to this day, social distinctions are felt as rather absurd and a definite caste system becomes next to impossible.

It is in this respect that one feels most deeply American when abroad; we always resent the servile

"sir" of the English "man" and find it difficult not to cry out in rage when foreign taxi-drivers or luggage men doff their caps out of, if not real respect, at all events immemorial tradition. The spontaneous sense of equality of the blaspheming American baggage-smasher appears healthy and genuinely democratic by comparison. In fact our hatred of servility in any of its forms is one of the deepest of our national feelings; we really do believe that one man is just as good as another—if not a little bit better.

But this is not ten per cent the outcome of Puritanism; it is the equality of the pioneer, or in modern terms the *entrepreneur*, to become which, if one wishes, is still regarded as every native American's inalienable right. It is not an especially ennobling type of equality, to be sure; it is rather the type of equality that states that every little pig shall have his equal chance at the swill-trough of national prosperity. Yet whatever its materialistic origins, it has resulted in a very definite emotional attitude, an almost complete absence of anything like class-consciousness. This is the real and fundamental reason why the Socialist party in America remains essentially alien in its point of view, and has never adapted itself successfully to native psychological conditions. Temperamentally we dislike uniforms, rank, titles, medals, and all other badges of distinction and difference; which has resulted, as all foreign observers have pointed out, in an incredible uniformity of dress and speech and mannerism, a standardization fitting in extremely well with modern industrial methods, national advertising, and large-scale production.

To put it in a nutshell, the docility which Mr. Nevinson justly and correctly deplores is the price we pay for a real democratic equality. When distinction of any kind, even intellectual distinction, is somehow resented as a betrayal of the American spirit of equal opportunity for all, the result must be just this terror of individualistic impulses setting us apart, either above or below our neighbors; just this determination to obey without questioning and to subscribe with passion to the conventions and traditions. The dilemma becomes a very real one: How can this sense of democratic equality be made compatible with respect for exceptional personalities or great minds? How can democracy, as we understand it to-day, with its iron repression of the free spirit, its monotonous standardization of everything, learn to cherish an intellectual aristocracy without which any nation runs the risk of becoming a civilization of the commonplace and the second-rate?

American docility is the natural result of the pioneering background of our history, just as European servility is the natural result of that continent's feudal background. In the first instance, our terror before what is called public opinion and our fear that we shall be found out transgressing the accepted moral standards, has its compensation in the absence of any bowing-down before mere caste. In the second instance, the intense class-consciousness in a country like England has its compensation in the presence of an intellectual aristocracy that does not hesitate to view middle-class morality and middle-class ideals with contempt. Whichever view prevails, there are advantages and disadvantages. Is it possible to reconcile the advantages and at the same time avoid the evils which look like the necessary correlative of adopting either point of view?

The history of American democracy during the last ten years does not seem to point to an affirmative answer to that question; to tell the truth, to find an

answer to the riddle appears too much like discovering how to eat one's cake and have it too, a discovery not yet made although mankind rather obstinately refuses to give up hope. For is it not really an open question whether we have not abandoned our terror of mere caste only to replace it with an even fiercer terror of that democratic leviathan, The Average Man? Have we not refused to bow down to noble blood, only that we may bow down in even more lowly fashion to the average man and his commonplace prejudices?

Certainly any thoughtful student of the course of social history in democratic America would hesitate to answer these questions in the negative. We have witnessed a steady increase in the glorification of the average; the average in health, in morals, in intellect. Our strongest passion seems to have become more and more the passion to be as closely as possible like everyone else. From the point of view of human personality, we have literally become afraid to go home in the dark. This increasing standardization is no mere accident; it is part of the normal development of our type of democracy, at least up to the saturation-point. At present, our most logical hope can only be that this saturation-point has been almost, if not fully, reached. We shall but be hugging illusions, if we imagine that any great literary or artistic movement will be possible in America until the present ideals of democratic equality have been re-examined and re-evaluated.

BACK TO THE WOODS.

Now that summer is on the wane, there can be little danger of spoiling sport in reflecting briefly on the manner in which our countrymen pass their vacations. We have witnessed the usual exodus from the city back to the woods; we have seen young business men by the thousand tearing off their stiff collars and donning the loose garments, or none, of Cooper's heroes; the arts of the scout and the squaw have surged again to the forefront of our social activities: all America has reverted to the ways, not so much of its ancestors, as of the aborigines of this continent. If there is any generalization, indeed, that can be safely made about our society, it is that when he gets the chance, when he is able for two weeks to follow his own will and pleasure, the young, the middle-aged and even the old American turns his back upon the civilization his forebears have so proudly reared and seeks to recover the lost trail of the Red Man.

Superficially, this phenomenon is not peculiar to America. Something like it is true of every industrial society. Fresh woods and pastures green are the desire of all hearts that wilt and tremble in the clangour of the modern city: the very idea of the vacation betrays the reality of a social life that allows no play to our rejuvenizing impulses. Imagine a Greek of the fifth century wanting a week off! But the European of whatever class is not, one fancies, eager to make an escape quite so complete as that which we are impelled to make in America: he does not, for instance, wish to shed the sartorial skin of civilization; his vacation-pleasures are not only less remote than ours from the associations of society, they are also far more varied. The young clerks and operatives of Manchester or Lyons or Bremen are more likely to set out on bicycles, and not to the wilder parts of their country but to those that are precisely the most cultivated; to visit old cathedral towns; to picnic amid ruins and immemorial vineyards; to talk and amuse themselves in quiet parks and closes. One

might easily exaggerate the idyllic aspect of the popular European holiday, which has indeed other and possibly more brutal aspects than one is likely to observe in America. But it might in a general way be said that Europeans, freed for the moment from the tyranny of what is to them the habitual aspect of civilization, seek rest and solace, not through an escape from civilization itself, but rather through an instinctive return to what is more and more essentially of it.

This annual exodus of ours back to the woods is, therefore and ineluctably, a somewhat sinister comment on American society. This thing we have made our instincts repudiate, and it is not only the instincts of those who might be accused of being over-cultivated that repudiate it, but the instincts of the rank and file also, the instincts even of those captains of industry who have so largely made our society; who are, as they boast, continuing to make it; who are always saying that the heads of the universities and the bishops and the chief engineers and the governors and the President and all others in authority ought to be business men also; and who can scarcely get through the year without a month of "roughing it." One and all, we repudiate this social mechanism of ours; extol it as we may in baccalaureate sermons and at bankers' dinners we seek personally, and the bankers not least, whenever we are free to act as we will, to withdraw from it and revert to nature. Consider the traditional vogue among us not only of "Huckleberry Finn" but of its innumerable progeny. "To be a boy again just for a day!" To get back to the ole swimming hole! To be a Penrod once more! It is one of the two or three universal burdens of our popular literature. Society, as we know it, irks us, strains us, bores us, and our society irks and strains us more even than European society irks its victims. The young American business man is the symbol of it all. Behold him in his harness, his one-hundred-per-cent American raiment, trying to maintain the difficult and lofty frown a too importunate will-to-power has fixed upon his reluctant visage: one can understand his innocent wish to rip it off and dive into the nearest available mud-puddle. Nature, Mother Nature, how soft and easy her ample bosom is!

There was a day when we used to think that this return to nature was the sign of our primitive strength. We despised society, not knowing that it was only our own society we despised (for we Americans knew no other): we were, in our own conceit, the children of something greater, we were the lion's cubs, and we sought the wild honey of the woods as the only food fit for gods. But we know now that these impulses are the result simply of maladjustment, that the backward trail is the line of least resistance, and that those who are driven to escape from society are not society's superiors but society's neurotic victims. The healthy man is he whose will prevails not over the wills of elephants, lions, bears, wildcats, woodchucks, chipmunks and garter-snakes, but over his own human, all-too-human self: even Theodore Roosevelt would have been a more convincing Nimrod if, as a statesman, he had revealed himself as something less of a weathercock. They are nervous invalids, these Nimrods of ours, curing themselves in the eye of the world: their strenuousness is the index of anything but a conscious and deliberate power over life. It is in our weakness that we return to nature; our health comes from the hills when we have no health in ourselves.

We Americans are the prey of a curious delusion: we still believe that business men, whose life inevitably

arrests their development, who are all but incapable of mature judgment outside their narrow sphere, who see the world in terms only of immediate data, whose minds are fed by nothing but the newspapers, are, despite these obvious facts, competent to direct human destiny. Our civilization, the house they have built for us, what is it but a crazy, ramshackle pioneer lean-to, as it were, that drives us out into the woods for shelter? There is no hearth in its wretched *penetralia*, the wind and the rain sweep through it, at every storm it clatters about our ears. What if they do patch it up again, these hectic, incompetent builders who can not build because the true architects are themselves, in our day, incompetent to give them plans! It will never be a home for us, it will never win our loyalty. But let us not imagine, we disaffected ones, that we shall find in the woods either anything but the fatalistic resignation our ancestors found who went West for their kingdom and became the keepers of asses.

No, the woods are our abyss; in the woods we become too godlike in our own conceit. We are human beings and we need a home; a society to nurture us and our children, not as gods, but as human beings; and we must build that society. Who that is truly conscious of life denies it? There are some who assert that first we must rip asunder the contrivances of the business men. It is a waste of energy in a generation when the workers and the artists are marching with steady stride into the possession of the world. They have built societies before, these workers and these artists, and they know; and if they do not seem to know, it is because for the moment their memories are dim. It is they who have built the cathedrals and all the gracious cities of the past, who have built that civilization of which the remnants remain and to which our thoughts fly as to their natural home; and they will build it again. They will even find it convenient to accept a few steel timbers from the shanties of the business men. Let us preserve our good humour. The children of Wall Street are entitled, like other children, to their chatter. The big battalions are on our side, and the sages also.

THE NEWEST FREEDOM.

WHEN his name was announced I remembered an appeal which had solicited my support for a crusade of which he was the Honorary Secretary. I searched hastily amongst the papers that littered the desk before me, but could not unearth the document. I vaguely recollected how the ill-fated words "League" and "Freedom" at the head of the manifesto had at once dispensed me from the labour of reading further, until the mundane troubles of this strangely democratized world had become less urgent. Now he was coming into the room and I had not the faintest idea of his business. He mentioned his name, and at once began:

"You have read the League's manifesto?"

"Oh, yes, the League . . .," I said, trying evasively to suggest an intimate acquaintance with all the Leagues in which it is possible for a right-thinking citizen to be absorbed nowadays.

"I am the Honorary Secretary of the Friends of Intellectual Freedom," he continued. "We are counting on the support of men like you."

On general principles I felt that I was no doubt worthy of the confidence implied, but in the absence of any specific details as to the nature of the crusade, I was inclined to caution. I did not know whether it was the referendum, proportional representation, the nationalization of women or Georgia for the Georgians, which these people regarded as the first step towards the millennium.

"We know," he went on, "how you must have experienced the same disillusionment as ourselves. People talk of the way the middle class is being squeezed out by the pressure of Big Business on the one side, and organized labour on the other. But what of the plight of the artist, the intellectual? He has no union, and no war-bonus. He can not become a wage-profitier." "One can always escape into some official

bypath," I ventured. "The tyranny of the State is now so formidable that the intellectuals are guilty of treachery who join in the conspiracy against truth and liberty. The plain people rely upon them for an independent valuation of ideas. What is to become of freedom of thought when almost every writer is mobilized in the service of some official propaganda or other?" He looked so distressed that I felt compelled to comfort him by suggesting that he should put his talents at the disposal of the capital-lettered People. To my astonishment his distress turned to indignation. "Did you not read our manifesto?" he asked, pulling a document out of his pocket. Whereupon he declaimed, with vehement and passionate gravity, a new declaration of independence.

The Friends of Intellectual Freedom, I gathered, proposed to emancipate the intelligentsia from further exploitation by the proletariat. They referred to the prevalent illusion that all the ills of their class were due to the exigencies of the capitalist system. The degradation of literature did not begin until the writer had to cater for the needs of the plain people. So long as the arts depended on the patronage of the great, they flourished unaffected by the criticism or applause of the mob. The latter had cunningly succeeded in persuading their victims to take the part of those who had enslaved them. The idealists had, from the earliest times, fallen amongst these thieves of the intellect, whose practice it has been to exploit those well-meaning creatures for ignoble ends. Profiting by the learning, eloquence and sacrifices of superior men, the crowd has used them for the attainment of petty advantages, whose value, if any, has been temporary, and actually an obstacle to the achievement of the ultimate object. The Friends of Intellectual Freedom appealed to all intelligent men to revolt against this senseless tyranny.

"Do you intend," cried their spokesman, "to go on submitting to this shameless exploitation of your talents and ideals? Are we to join the numerous ranks of those employed Idealists, living and dead, whose eyes were turned towards a new Star in the East, while their followers concentrated on some immediate and illusory benefit? If we are such fools as to head a crusade for the reorganization of society, our beautiful visions will be regarded as just so much necessary eye-wash by people in search of more time for the movies, or more money for mail-order luxuries. Once they have used us as stalking-horses, our newly embourgeoised disciples will call loudly for the suppression of such damned radicals and bolsheviks as ourselves. The exploiters of the intelligentsia do not mind who does the talking about ideals, provided they get into possession of what they covet under the existing order. Hence the disillusionment of all revolutions."

"But," I asked, "what can I do about it? If, as you say, the superior men have invariably been exploited and then thrown over by their alleged disciples, the reason must be sought in the endless vanity of the intellectual, who seem to enjoy the admiration and applause of the masses."

"The Friends of Intellectual Freedom believe that the arts must be made safe from democracy. We must revert to the system of patronage. This will enable authors and publishers to overcome the formidable obstacle of present high manufacturing costs, which will soon make it possible to publish only best-sellers. Patronage will make literature dependent, not on the whims of the semi-educated, but on the taste and goodwill of a select group of subscribers. Some of the finest books in the world owe their existence to that system. At the worst, it will mean that the weaknesses of a few must be considered, instead of the least common denominator of the taste of the average man. As it is, there is a perceptible tendency in this direction, as the example of George Moore proves. In France, too, there has been an enormous development in the production of limited editions for subscribers, since the cost of commercial publishing has become excessive."

Such is the gist of the remarks with which my visitor left me to think over the question of joining the League. I have meditated upon the subtle quality which marks off the writer who can count on an advance-list of subscribers, from the writer who can not do so. Popularity is not the test; nor is it a gift for pornography that decides, nor a high degree of merit. The thing is as mysterious as the process whereby a first edition of Conrad becomes more valuable than a first edition of Byron, and an autograph letter of George Moore's than a letter by Thomas Moore. Perhaps a letter to the Secretary of the Friends of Intellectual Freedom will bring an explanation as to how subscribers are to be lured. Meanwhile, there is no reason why potential members of the League should not try to reach the goal by direct action. For a fraction of the cost of membership an advertisement in the following terms can be inserted in the public prints:

FOR SALE OR RENT
WITH IMMEDIATE POSSESSION
A SEMI-DETACHED INTELLECTUAL.

A well furnished modern intellectual. Accommodation: six living languages; well-arranged commodious ideas commanding uninterrupted view of surrounding problems; widely developed experiences; mental fittings have recently been thoroughly overhauled and redecorated. Body in excellent repair; clear of incumbrance. Concrete ideals. Personal inspection if desired. Full particulars as to price, etc., on application to sole agents, Messrs. Judas & Iscariot.

ERNEST A. BOYD.

HOW WILL IT BE DONE AGAIN?

THE rulers of the earth know that human opinion is formed out of one substance from beginning to end; that its length and breadth and thickness is prejudice. They know it is not the fact, but men's reading of the fact that is important; and that on human opinion, a stuff seemingly as impermanent as cloud-shadows, depends every reputation, every accepted custom, every common-sense maxim, every understanding, every law by which we live. Each citizen has in his head a budget of individual leanings, preferences, biases, which he can only partially explain, even to himself, and which make up his philosophic system. Out of the multitudinous, confusing averages of these budgets come the waves of conviction on which men ride to wealth and power.

Since this is so, it is strange that our political and economic arrangements change so little from year to year, from century to century; or it would be strange if the existence of property did not fully explain the perpetuation of all our beliefs. Ownership, of course, whether of your good name, or your hat, or your garden, is simply a matter of how your neighbours regard you and your possessions. There is no actual proprietorship apart from the tolerance of the majority, and though that tolerance is built of the wayward and shifting thoughts of men it is not likely to fail you in quiet times. For men have had, one and all, material reasons for upholding the order in which they live, and if their thoughts ever wandered into forbidden paths, they were shortly checked and diverted. A man reasons, usually, as it is to his interest to reason. If he owns property, he will find arguments for the ownership of property; if he edits a newspaper, he will find arguments in favour of the policy of the owner; if he manages a mine, he will justify the employment of detectives to combat the unions. The fabric of our civilization is a gigantic fiction to which we subscribe because we get something out of it. Few men know how completely they are influenced by immediate satisfactions, but their ignorance of their mental processes only makes the fabric solidier and does not affect its meretricious character.

Yet we have seen that traditions can change vastly in a very few years. There was a time, not so long ago, when we took it for granted that public officials would be the last among us to connive at violating the Constitution of the United States. Now we know that when the Constitution gets in the way of ambition and the vengeance of a frightened official, it must stand aside. We swallow that knowledge and keep our faces straight. We discovered by watching the Albany trial, that property, and not the people, is primarily represented in the New York State Assembly. We found out during the war by watching Messrs. Creel, Sisson, Northcliffe, and their like, that official propaganda and prevarication are not only possible but quite respectable. We have well-nigh forgotten that once upon a time these things were new to us, but so they were.

The British Government's conduct toward Ireland has opened our guileless eyes to the truth that the only connexion between these two islands, to-day as yester-

day, is the chain of ruthless imperialism. The facts of Amritsar prove that Great Britain goes about her task of keeping slave-nations in order just as Legree subdued Uncle Tom. The policy of the Allies since the war shows clearly enough that when all is said and done the great conflict was really another trade-war. The nine months' blockade of Germany following the armistice and the naive selfishness of France, have gone far toward disillusioning the most ardent idealist among us concerning war-aims.

If any further evidence were needed, Russia presents a clear case. Russia made the greatest sacrifices that were made on the Allied side, and never injured the cause in any positive fashion. Yet against Russia the full strength of Allied bitterness has gone forth. Robbed of a valid excuse for hostilities, the Governments of England, France, and the United States have upheld her enemies until their effort has become ridiculous; they have lied about the Soviet Government until their statements have become laughable; they have tricked and threatened and abused till their meaning and inspiration are obvious to the most egregious stupidity. And all because Russia has sinned against them by tampering with the integrity of privilege. If the recent history of Christian nations be consulted, it becomes apparent that in their eyes the crime against the Holy Ghost is the formulation of a new concept of title-deeds and rights of possession. They fight, we find, in the last analysis, for the system of privileged monopoly; that to them is civilization.

These are unpleasant ideas; but we have accepted them, gulped them down. During the last six years we have changed our minds about governments; we have changed our minds about ourselves. We are on the one hand more cowardly, but on the other, less deceived. The central fact is that we are changed. Ten years ago, the revelation of any one of ten thousand governmental schemes and purposes which we now view quite calmly, would have shaken the 'versal world. One has but to imagine the effect of Lord Fisher's "Memoirs," had they been published in 1910, to calculate the speed and direction of our drifting. The essence of what we have found out is that all governments are rotten and that we are helpless. And from this we draw the conclusion that since there is nothing we can do, we must simply grin and bear it. The great river of opinion, though it may not have shifted its banks, has decidedly changed colour. From a rosy optimism, it has darkened to a depressing grey.

In all the history of the world never have so many people changed their minds at one time about anything. We have set a record, we of this generation—though that is really nothing to be proud of, since we paid heavily and will continue for a long time to pay heavily, for our aberration. The faith that is definitely gone from us is the trust in government; the belief that political organizations, erected to protect the average man in his average holding, will actually give him value received. At heart, we are no longer loyal to the system in which we live; we know it is not honest. We have absorbed the lesson that we exist in this system, as matters stand, only on sufferance, and because we are useful to the powers that be.

In other words we no longer accept it as axiomatic that if we help the big fellows keep what they've got, they in their turn will help us when we get into trouble. Property, privilege and government are to us no longer a sacred trinity to be knelt to and worshipped. We know now not only that we have been fooled, but we know likewise how we have been fooled, and now the

great question is—among the medicine-men—how we are to be fooled again. The rulers of the earth know that everything depends on public opinion, and the stuff of opinion has somehow slipped from their grasp.

MAXWELL ANDERSON.

CIVILIZATION AS AN ART.

A DISTINGUISHED Russian thinker once confided to me an idea which had obsessed him for a number of years. He was planning a history of civilization of which the dominant concept was to be the progressive self-realization of the Ego. Like many another before him, my friend died without having realized his project; his idea remained with me, however, and I soon came to realize that a living truth was hidden behind the somewhat forbidding formulation.

There is probably no other aspect of civilization in which the pulse of historic advance is reflected as faithfully as it is in the problem of the Self. What is the Ego, the Self? What is its relation to society? Is it wholly socialized or does it, at least in part, remain aloof? Is it free or determined?

History knows no absolutes, but speaking relatively, the problem of the Self is a recent problem. It is only a little older than psycho-analysis—that cure for a disease or perhaps a disease itself, or perhaps both, but certainly intensely and characteristically modern.

Primitive man was but a microcosm, reproducing with wellnigh slavish exactitude the content of the social macrocosm. In his own small way he may have invented and created; individual reflection and even doubt were not wholly foreign to him; he chafed at times under the disindividualizing rigour of a moral code, and here and there, following a master more powerful than society itself, he chose for himself a bride whom custom denied him. But all in all, primitive man was not an individualist, not in a full sense an individual. His personal self was so thickly overlaid with social fringes as to lose itself in their mazes.

As civilization advanced and its complexity increased, the enslavement of the individual gave way before an ever progressing liberation. The many influences to which the individual is subjected in a highly complex and diversified civilization prevent him from becoming wholly subservient to any one of these influences. There is much overlapping, much cancellation, professional specialization; the limitation of knowledge on the part of groups and individuals when compared with the totality of knowledge of the entire group, reduce the individual to a representative of a mere fraction of what he calls his civilization. Thus he comes to stand not for the whole but for a part, and that part he usually represents less intensely and with a lesser sacrifice of self than was the case in the remote periods in history. And yet, we find that the majority of individuals somehow conform to their civilization, live it to a degree which seems at first surprising. The fact is, that civilization did not look with indifference upon the individual who thus showed a tendency to escape from its hold. Further to claim the allegiance of the individual, in self protection, as it were, civilization bestowed upon him suits of armour.

An armour of iron—inertia. To follow the beaten path, to do as others do, "What was good enough for father is good enough for me," to luxuriate in the accepted and commonplace and to dread the new, the individual, the freaky—such is the code of inertia, of psychic passivity, and a mighty bulwark it is of the *status quo*, of civilization such as it is.

An armour of tempered steel—snobbishness. The snobbishness of race, nation, class, family. The tune of snobbishness is not unlike that of inertia, only that the traditions adhered to are here sharply felt to be those of a particular group, and other groups are looked down upon for not sharing the tradition.

An armour of silver—puritanism. Puritanism is a palliative for heresy, for non-conformism; where these do not exist, there is no room for the Puritan. To him the adherence to a set of rules for thought and behaviour is a matter of duty involving a heroic act, the supremacy of the will.

An armour of gold—dogmatic evolutionism. An individual may have escaped from the clutches of inertia, of Puritanism, of snobbishness, he still faces a "purely intellectual" rampart, which may successfully keep him where he is, lustily conforming to the precepts of his civilization, for is it not the pinnacle of cultural advance and history's most beautiful flower?

An armour of miracle—supernaturalism. Where the other helpmates of civilization exist, supernaturalism is their support. The sanctions of another world enhance the sanctions of this one in strengthening adherence to given standards of civilization, and when these other helpmates fail, supernaturalism alone may prove powerful enough to keep the individual within very narrow bounds of variation from what his civilization prescribes as the true and the good and the beautiful.

But the time comes when in the red heat of knowledge, of criticism and of growing moral detachment, all these protective armours of civilization melt away, even the last one, that of supernaturalism. For, while evidence may be incomplete that man is fashioned after the image of God, who can doubt any longer that God, gods, everywhere and always, were fashioned after the image of man? And with this realization there comes disillusionment. Supernaturalism loses its hold, institutionalized religion can no longer provide a sufficiently impressive vindication of civilization, such as it is. Henceforth, the liberation of the individual progresses at a rapid pace.

What is the result? Do we find the liberated, detached individual turning his back upon civilization, becoming an individualist in the narrow sense of the word, foreign to the values of traditional thought and behaviour, hostile to all that comes down from the past, critical of all that was said and written and preached for generations, aloof and cynical and self-centred? Yes, at times, the picture is not unlike that. Thus, the young Tolstoy and with him Turgenev and Dostoevsky, at an early stage in their careers, when they belonged to the golden youth of Petrograd and Moscow, felt themselves wholly detached from all in civilization, but what they themselves chose to follow; and, in particular, were they cynical in their attitude towards so-called ideal values. Only that which could be proven, only the values of science and of matter were sufficiently stable and reliable to be accepted as guidance through life. Such, also, was the creed of Basárov, the nihilist, who in "Fathers and Sons," scoffed at idealism, and doubted all but what could be convincingly demonstrated. Such quasi-enlightened selfishness, in fact, was for a time the motto of the progressive and aspiring Russian intelligentsia. Like a scarlet thread this notion runs through Chernyshevsky's "What is to be Done?"

But cynicism is not the only possible alternative to civilizational subservience. We know that detached

individual. He is with us oftener than might perhaps be supposed. It is true he does not submit to his civilization without murmur or criticism or creative variation, but he submits, he lives his civilization, he does not impress us as a doubter or a cynic. His actions and reactions command respect, they are convincing. He has imbibed the knowledge of books and experience, but he carries it lightly and joyfully, seeming to make use of it when he cares and laying it aside at other times. He feels the artistic and moral ideals of his time. In fact, he not infrequently appears as their most enthusiastic representative. Even in matters of etiquette, of social behaviour and conformity, he does not seem to deviate from the accepted as much as one might expect. What is the reason? What is it that holds him? In the name of what principle, of what appeal? Does civilization still mean something to one who is free from the chains of prejudice, of passive living on, of snobbishness, or puritanical hero worship, of an exalted faith in cultural evolution, of the sanctions of a localized supernaturalism?

If the answer to this query must be positive, it is due to this, that the detached individual lives his civilization as an artist, with intuition, sympathy and creativeness. It does not enslave him, but it provides the form through which his individuality expresses itself, a form that is not lightly to be cast aside, for civilization is an essential medium for the life of an individual. If there is no civilization, there is no individual. Thus, if he wants to be himself, he must at the same time be civilized, live in civilization, for it is that content which is offered him by education and the experience of his individual life.

It has for long been understood that a life-like representation of an exotic civilization, of a civilization of another people or time, was impossible without that sympathetic and creative insight which characterizes the artist. Whether sociologist or historian or painter or literary master, the re-creator of the past must live the civilization he wants to present, must feel and think it as an artist, before he can create a living picture of such a civilization. Why, then, this limitation of the artistic outlook to foreign, exotic civilizations? Can not the individual live his own civilization as a creator, as an artist? Live it in idea? Yes, but also in flesh and blood.

This relation of the liberated individual to his civilization may be brought home by an analogy. Civilization is like a musical composition, the individual who lives it, is like an artist, like a performer. He has not created his civilization, it is given to him, but his art enables him to reproduce it and to transform it in an individual and peculiar way. This process of living and creatively transforming civilization is not always the same. Some strike a rapid *tempo*, the pace of others is slower. One emphasizes the rhythmic character, another the harmonic aspect. Then, again, the strains of melody, emotion-stirring, full of human appeal, are brought out by one, even as the late Saffonov used to bring out the heartrending melodies of Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique"; whereas another reduces the melodic beauties to a warm pastel, while bringing out the complex and intricate combinations of the work, even as the great Nikisch does when conducting that same "Pathétique." At times the sombre aspects are more congenial to a particular temperament, while another delves lustily into the joyful and exhilarating passages. For one, the whole performance is nothing but a delightful technical exhibition, another does not

worry about a slip here and there, if only the interpretation is properly impressive.

To create the whole of a civilization is beyond the ken of any artist individual, but he enriches what he receives by ample touches of his individuality. These may reach deep into the very essence of his civilization and finding response in other more passive carriers of the civilizational content, they may prove the starting-point of a new era or epoch. Or his contribution may be of a lighter sort, after the manner of those lace-like embellishments with which Liszt loved to adorn the works of Wagner and Schubert, or of those elaborate technical arabesques with which our own Godowsky is wont to decorate the works of Chopin. And, at times, even as Godowsky in some of his freaky arrangements attempts to play one étude with the left hand, while playing another with the right, some artists of civilization combine, just for the technical joy of it, two professions or realms of knowledge or activity, thus arousing the admiration of their contemporaries, tempered only by a sense of the futility of such somewhat spectacular accomplishments.

And where there is art there is play. Anton Rubinstein once said to a lady who was about to become his pupil and had just risen from a brilliant performance of a difficult work: "My dear lady, this is not playing on the piano, it is playing with the piano." Playing on the piano is an art, playing with the piano requires art, but the mood is different. It is at times delightful to play with that which at other times is most sacred and impressive and full of deeper significance. To "play with the technique," in the words of Boas, the anthropologist, is a most charming occupation indulged in by many an artist. So it is with civilization. The creative individual is the one who lives as an artist, absorbs civilization, responds to it in his own individual way, enriches it by his creativeness, and, in off moments, plays with it, just for the joy of a rich and colourful experience.

It may perhaps be questioned whether the artist individual will not prove as narrow-minded, as partial to his own, overbearing towards the foreign and strange, as did the passive conformer, the racial or national snob, the puritan and the religionist. The question is justified. Artists have often, perhaps, all too often, proved to be poor critics of art, and there is such a thing as artistic pig-headedness. But the optimist turns for a brighter outlook to the examples of artist-critics, for have we not had a Wagner, a Schumann, a Nietzsche, a Merezhkovsky, a Rodin? May we not hope, therefore, that the artist individual of the future will face other civilizations, not as a missionary, to elevate and reform, nor as a culture hero, to enlighten and instruct, nor as a judge, to approve or condemn and mete out punishment or reward, but as an artist and art-critic, with intuition and sympathy and imagination?

A. A. GOLDENWEISER.

INNOCENTS ABROAD.

REALLY, when will we Americans outgrow the rôle of the Innocents Abroad of international politics?

Consider the Vanderlip Mission, which has just concluded its visit to Japan. Here is a group of men from the foremost ranks in American finance, commerce, education and public life; men whose names carry national weight and consequent foreign prestige; men such as Frank A. Vanderlip himself, Henry W. Taft, brother of a former President; Lyman J. Gage, a former Secretary of the Treasury; Darwin P. Kingsley, president of one of our largest insurance companies; Dr. Jacob Gould Schur-

man, former president of Cornell University; the most imposing company of Americans that has ever visited the Far East.

They come, on the invitation of a semi-official Japanese association and as its guests, because, in their own words, "recently the good relationship between the two countries has been threatened from many sources." Their object is "a conference wherein free and frank discussion on current international questions should be made for the purpose of clearing away the clouds of misunderstanding and misrepresentation." A laudable object, truly; and may the more eloquence and persuasiveness be to their tongues!

They address themselves therefore to (1) Japanese immigration in America, (2) Shantung, (3) loans to China, (4) Siberia, (5) Korea, (6) Manchuria and Mongolia, (7) co-operative enterprises between Japan and America in China, (8) a submarine cable between Japan and America. A comprehensive programme, truly, and well drawn; an accurate statement of all the friction-points between Japan and the United States; a setting out of the problems of the Far East whose solution would lay the spectre of a Japanese-American war, and whose solution is necessary if there is to be future peace in Asia. A task to which a nation's leaders might well dedicate themselves and their careers.

How do they approach such a task? They spend twenty days on far Eastern soil—all in Japan. They are taken from tiffins to receptions, from receptions to dinners, from dinners to theatricals, nestled in the bosom of Japan's nobility, titled and shekeled. In the intervals—six intervals of from two to three hours each, to be exact—they hold free and frank conference. Shantung in two to three hours, development of China in two to three hours, Korea in two to three hours, Siberia in two to three hours.

They come to remove misunderstandings over China and Japan's relation to China, and never see China's shore. They come to deal with the delicate situation of Shantung, and never get within eight hundred miles of Tsingtao. They come to take up Korea's tangled case, and know not even what a Korean looks like. As they sit in solemn photographed conclave over Siberia, Japanese troops are overrunning the East Siberian provinces and Northern Manchuria. Japanese paramountcy is being consolidated in the formation of a new buffer state, and the destiny of a vast empire is turning: they are never within three days' journey of Vladivostok, Manchuria and Mongolia—nor ever exchange a word with a British, American or French business man who faces daily the method of Japanese competition in Mukden. The eighteen hours of conference over and the twenty days done, they don *hakama* and *haori* at a parting feast in the Detached Palace, get handshaked by an imperial relative—as near as ordinary mortals can come to the Divine presence—and board the "Korea Maru" for home, proclaiming success for their mission and breathing elegiacs to Bushido. While we in China, we snicker where we do not damn, as damn we do and fervently.

To the cementing-the-bonds ritual we make no objection. Men will do these things. They do them at banquets nightly in New York and London and Paris and wherever men of more than one nationality meet. When Mr. Vanderbilt and Baron Shibusawa click *sake*-cups to the peace that breathes o'er Asia and the *samisens* thrum delicate chords of hymnal to eternal friendship, we wish them joy of their feasting. When Mr. Kingsley, in glow of warmth at exquisite hospitality, exults that he has been bidden to "one of the oldest continuous civilizations in the world"—the while the menu before him is written in Chinese characters, the chopsticks at his plate are as fashioned by Confucius's forebears and the kimonos of his hosts are adapted from the garments of the Chou kings—we understand, we who, too, have tasted Japanese hospitality, the strength of his stimulus.

But the times are not propitious for innocuous ceremonial. These forces that are now making in this part

of the world are no matter for post-prandial nothings. They are deadly serious. They are fraught with menace to the children of the Osaka factory worker and the Colorado miner. They are balancing the fate of a continent. The future of one hemisphere, peace or war for two hemispheres, hangs on them. With every stage in their development they sharpen the conflict of interests between Japan and the United States; and that is a logic with but one sequence. If we are to learn anything from the last twenty years, if we are to learn anything from the result of similar situations in other parts of the world, we shall face this situation frankly and intelligently before, as a result of it, war with Japan becomes inevitable in the sense that the European war became inevitable: that is, before we shall have made its inevitableness. The instinct of the Vanderlip mission was true. Only by a free and frank exchange of extra-governmental agencies can misunderstanding be removed. The diplomatic machinery of both countries, as of other countries, is too hardened in tradition and cluttered with technique, too restricted in outlet, to be successful. The instinct was true enough; the action was adolescent.

The conflict of interests between the two countries is rooted in China; deepest down, at the moment, in Shantung. By all means let us come to accommodation with Japan over our respective positions in China; that is, to how great an extent Japan can claim priority over other nations. But you can not do that by tourist-picnics to Tokio. You can not do it without even seeing China. I have lived in China myself for five years. I know others who have lived here five times five; and with every year they grow more wary of conclusions on anything that touches its civilization or its people, even its politics. Its problems of to-day, its very surface political questions, its relations to other countries, grow out of the slow accumulations of three thousand years that constitute its civilization; a civilization so alien, even in its premises, that we of the West have barely the terms for its translation, to say nothing of complete understanding. To deal with it, then—as discussing Japan's relationship to China is dealing with it; namely, in a few hours of formal conversations in Tokio, and without even seeing the surface of it, that is, as I implied in the beginning, not statesmanship, not democratic diplomacy, but ingenuous sight-seeing. And when the men responsible are men of the standing of Mr. Vanderlip and his associates, their words will be echoed from the Indian Ocean to the northernmost tip of the Siberian coast as American views. They will be used skilfully on the Chinese for propaganda. They will make real understanding in the Far East further away and more difficult. Certainly you can not by the widest and most charitable stretch of imagination conceive a group of Britons or Frenchmen of similar standing doing this sort of thing; and we Americans, we do it all the time.

Nor is this all. I see by the news-cables that in a few weeks a party of three or four hundred Congressmen is coming this way. They have been apprised of the increasing importance of our interests in the Pacific. They know, they say, there will have to be legislation dealing with those interests. So they want to "study the situation on the spot." They will spend four or five days in Honolulu, four or five in the Philippines, four or five in Japan, four or five in China. Then they will go home and legislate. While they are here they will be photographed, they will be interviewed—how they will be interviewed!—they will make an infinity of speeches, they will . . . I know! I have lived in China and I have suffered.

I have seen the lawmakers of my native land in peregrination before. There was another party of solonic junketers, a smaller one, out here nearly five years ago. I happened to be in Shanghai then. A tiffin was given for them. I went. In the interval between two speeches one of them, a statesman from Chicago, came over to me and whispered. Did I represent any paper in America? he asked. I did. Well, then, let me listen. He was going

to give me some hot stuff. I would want to cable it home. In fact, it would be a personal favour to him if I did. And in the next twenty minutes he brought the American navy out to Asiatic waters, he laid down innumerable ultimatums to Japan and then he just simply scattered Japan to all the winds of the Pacific. And when we arose one American consul and four vice-consuls came rushing to me with fervent adjurations to say nothing in the papers. I didn't. Neither did anybody else.

As I say, I know. I know what to expect this time. Let them come, the three or four hundred. If they come to Peking, I shall go to Paotingfu. I shall have no journalistic embarrassments. The memory is fresh here yet of a tourist party to Peking organized by a Middle Western mayor many years ago, organized by advertisements in the papers: "Come and see the President of China in the Forbidden City with the Mayor of . . ." And nightly at the Wagon-Lits Hotel the mayor's party burst gustily into dinner, huge crossed Chinese and American flags protruding from the ample bosom of the mayor's wife. And every American correspondent in Peking went grovelling on his knees to every correspondent of every other nationality in Peking and implored the truce of silence.

Really . . . really, I sometimes think there ought to be a law against Americans leaving their native shores. Gladly would I in compensation therefor be confined for the rest of my days to communicating the tidings of "Seeks \$25,000 Heart-Balm" in, say, Chicago. Gladly.

NATHANIEL PEPPER.

POETRY.

LOVE SONG.

(*To Lys*)

I love you as I love the cause that rises
When truth's despoiled by lustful sacrifices.
I love you as I love the righteous cause
That seeks to re-establish nature's laws
In kindlier control of men; whereby
The primal heritage of earth and sky,
Love, laughter, life, becomes the lot of all.
Twice has my heart received a flaming call:
In youth, a dream of all mankind made free;
And now, the promise that you sing to me.
Ah, I would place a calmer sky above you,
A freer earth beneath—so do I love you!

ROBIN LAMPSON.

NEWS FROM POLAND IN THE GARDENS.

This summer day in Poland a thousand men were slain;
This day my fragrant roses were opening in the rain.

This day the whining bullets were searching out their
mark;

And in my peaceful hayfield I heard a meadow lark.

This day while fields were muddy from churning cannon
wheels

I watched my browsing heifer kick up her frisky heels.

This day while flowing life blood pulsed out the passing
hours

My pleasant reach of river bank was red with cardinal
flowers.

This day while greed and hatred were tearing men apart
I stumbled on a youth who held a maiden to his heart.

Oh, roses, larks and lovers, when shall you bring me
peace?

When shall the guns be silent, the angry tumult cease?

When shall the God of Battles be tumbled from his cloud,
And all deluded nations unwrap them from his shroud?

When shall the greedy perish, and love lift up his head?

Ah, roses, larks and lovers, when you and I are dead!

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

OLD IMMORTALITY.

A Duologue between Death and Immortality.

DEATH: Hullo, Gaffer, how are you getting on?

IMMORTALITY: Oh, I'm much as I always am.

DEATH: Are you? You don't look it. You are growing old.

IMMORT.: I have lived a long time.

DEATH: Not the same thing. So have I; but I don't look old,—or do I?

IMMORT.: You have not lived so long as I have.

DEATH: No, I suppose you began it by a minute or two. Life had to come before death. But you were only an idea; I was a fact.

IMMORT.: You think I'm only an idea, eh? Men have clung to that idea—for many thousands of years.

DEATH: How many thousands? Come! When did it begin? Where? Six thousand years ago, under the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden?—or under that other Tree which hadn't a garden—the Tree of Arboreal Man?

IMMORT.: I don't know what you mean.

DEATH: Did he—Arboreal Man—know what you mean? When did the idea come to him?

IMMORT.: When he had brain enough to take it in.

DEATH: To invent it?

IMMORT.: Men can not invent things they have never experienced. They knew you; me they did not know. Yet they came to believe in me.

DEATH: And in many other things too, which they had not experienced.

IMMORT.: For instance?

DEATH: God: perfect goodness, perfect wisdom, perfect power, perfect love. They never found that in their own lives—or did they?

IMMORT.: They found the beginnings of it.

DEATH: Just as they found the beginnings of you, in a wish to live longer.

IMMORT.: Isn't that in itself a proof of goodness?

DEATH: Of goodness?

IMMORT.: The goodness of Life.

DEATH: Because they want more of it? They want more of everything they have an appetite for. But is that always good for them?

IMMORT.: Appetite becomes sated, fails, diminishes, goes to nothing. I go on forever.

DEATH: The appetite for you is diminishing, my friend.

IMMORT.: No.

DEATH: Some day, may even cease to exist. Who knows? Perhaps you only live in the lighted thoughts of your worshippers. When those flicker out, or gutter down—where will you be then?

IMMORT.: Here.

DEATH: Waiting for your credentials in a new form? Will it be a lower or a higher?

IMMORT.: You mock at me: but I am not angry with you.

DEATH: Nor I with you. Why should we be? You do not deprive me of my victims or of my devotees: on the contrary you add to them. I, also, provide you with yours.

IMMORT.: How, pray?

DEATH: If they had not had to fear and face death—if they drifted into it unconsciously—men would never have thought about you. It is because they do not like me that they are so devoted to you.

IMMORT.: And how—I would now know—do I add to your—undertakings?

DEATH: In many ways. The idea of you has made many martyrs, many heroes, many wars—"holy" ones: Popes have blessed them, savages have ecstatically died for them—all because of you. Perhaps you have deprived me of a few suicides: I'm not sure. In all other directions I have much to thank you for.

IMMORT.: So you do not admire those martyrs, those heroes whom I have helped to face death?

DEATH: On the contrary I admire them greatly—as the butcher admires well-fed mutton, and thanks the breeder who has produced it. And yet I can not help thinking that all those martyrs and heroes would have been more heroic

had they died—believing less in you and more in me.

IMMORT.: That is very conceited of you.

DEATH: I only said "believing"—not admiring. I don't lay myself out for admiration.

IMMORT.: How would believing more in you exalt the standard of their heroism?

DEATH: Because they would be dying without hope of reward. A few have done so.

IMMORT.: Many more would not.

DEATH: Quite so: millions, I think, in the past. A few fine Pagans have managed to die impartially: but not many Christians, I fancy. They were not brought up to it.

IMMORT.: Truth has sustained them in virtue: that is a merit of truth, always.

DEATH: When you make your "truth" attractive. But when truth is not attractive, what then? Are not its followers the more to be admired?

IMMORT.: Well, let me hear of them?

DEATH: Ah, of course! They have not the privilege of your acquaintance; they don't appeal to you. But there are some now actually dying from a sense of duty to life—duty to science, duty to posterity, duty to everything except themselves—their own individual prospects, I mean—what the Christian calls his "immortal soul." They put all that aside, don't let it concern them. Those martyrs and heroes manage to do without you: they don't believe in you. Don't you think they are the greater for it?

IMMORT.: Presently they will be undeceived.

DEATH: Perhaps: my work lies in a different department, so I don't dogmatize. Yet I see you looking older, sadder, more frail than you used to look. I notice that you are beginning to take medicine: "table-turning" is, I believe, your latest tonic. It's a sad come-down for one who used to thrive on the things you did thrive on. Fastings, and flagellations, and fires, and unimaginable tortures only strengthened the idea your followers formed about you. Oh, yes: you provided me with the most dauntless devotees one could wish for: and though some of them scarcely believed in me at all—so absent-minded were they—nevertheless I passed them, gave them their death-certificate like all the rest. If they have reached you safely, well and good: if they haven't, they have not discovered it, and you are no loss to them—for they don't know. That, at least, should be a consolation to you in your old age: you may say that you have disappointed no one. I have not so consoling a record; still I have pleased some people—the heroes, and the martyrs, and a few suicides genuinely convinced as to the futility of life, and many good plodding souls worn out in the service of their fellow-men. It is only to the thoroughly selfish and dissolute, cut off before appetite failed them—perhaps also to clear-seeing youths unwillingly compelled to fight the sham battles for liberty devised by their conspiring elders—it is only to these that I am really the bitter pill I seem to so many others. But enough about myself: my concern now is about you—as one who may possibly some day require my attention. Tell me truly, how does this table-turning remedy suit you? Is it really doing you good?

IMMORT.: I have hardly thought about it yet. It wasn't my own prescription.

DEATH: No, in a way it was mine; my recent activities, that is to say, produced it. The War was supposed to have given a shock to your system—people were feeling discouraged about you—and table-turning was prescribed as a remedy.

IMMORT.: I can at least say that it has done me no harm.

DEATH: Are you sure?

IMMORT.: It has made many believe in me who did not previously.

DEATH: Likely enough! People react to certain drugs—for a time. Afterwards they get let down. Isn't there some danger of it in this case?—or do you hold that to be believed in on any grounds is good—both for you and for them?

IMMORT.: If nobody believed in me, I should still exist.

DEATH: Well, if I find that idea keeping you alive when the thing happens, there will be something in it. We will wait and see.

IMMORT.: So you think that some day the world will cease to believe in me? It may also cease to believe in you.

DEATH: It may. Some do already. They call themselves "Christian Scientists" and hold that "mortal mind" is merely a delusion. I get them all the same; their disbelief has made no difference to me, so far.

IMMORT.: And it will make none to me.

DEATH: Then I wonder what is making the difference? After all—what has immortality to offer but life? If men get disillusioned about life, they may get disillusioned about you, too. Have a care, my friend, have a care! Table-turning won't cure that. It may even make them believe—horribly—in something they would rather not believe! And then—who knows?—being human, they may smash up their tables, in a rage, for telling them the truth. They may find that after all they prefer me! You shake your head at that. Well, I'm busy: I have calls to make, and must be going. Good-bye! If you should ever want me, for yourself, don't hesitate to send for me! Meanwhile, just give a thought to my heroes and martyrs! It's a real moral problem. Aren't they the greatest after all? If in the end you do reward them—with anything worth having—it will be the greatest surprise of their lives.

[Exit DEATH. IMMORTALITY (supported by Sir A. Conan Doyle & Co.) is left sitting.]

LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

A LESSON IN ECONOMICS.

SIRS: I have followed with interest the articles of Mr. Pinchot published in the *Freeman*, and the letters in your correspondence columns from socialists whose desire to get at the editorial policy of your paper seems to be as keen as your desire to learn what real reason can be advanced for a third party at this time. If I understand your position aright, you insist on putting first things first; you have done with the expediences of political action, and believe the time is come when only a widely-diffused knowledge of economic principles can fit a nation for the task of bringing about fundamental reform. It is difficult to see what fault can be found with this; almost as difficult as to discover what your critics are sometimes driving at.

For example, I can not understand Mr. Norman Thomas's drift, when he says, "Another objection to the practicability of the program outlined by Mr. Pinchot is to be found in the attitude of private holders of capital. Mr. Pinchot condemns revolution and seeks instead the abolition of privilege, an achievement which he seems to think can be brought about by political action. But privilege now is part of the warp and woof of the capitalistic system." I feel sure that Mr. Thomas and I do not agree as to the definitions of the terms "capital," "privilege," and the "capitalistic system." If his definition for the term capital is that part of wealth that aids in the production of more wealth, then I cannot understand the objection to the practicability of Mr. Pinchot's programme. The vast majority of the British electors voted in favour of the taxation of land-values, the only practical way to abolish privilege, at the general elections of 1906 and 1910. What, then, is the nature of the capital held privately in our country that would cause its owners to take an attitude so different from that of British owners? Mr. Thomas seems not to be thinking of capital. He must be aware that the capitalists of this country submit meekly to such burdens of taxation on both income and capital as no socialist would have dreamed of suggesting ten years ago. It seems to me that Mr. Thomas and his friends might first learn what privilege is and what it is they are fighting under what he calls the capitalistic system. That he is not clear about this is to be seen in the following sentence: "To ask the capitalist big or little to join in the destruction of privilege, is like inviting him to face a major operation without an anæsthetic." What kind of army of capitalists is it that Mr. Thomas has in mind? Out of the population of 110,000,000 in this country there can not be more than 10,000 persons who so regard the opera-

tion. There are over 15,000 capitalist concerns supporting the Ralston bill for the taxation of land-values, and they can not believe that privilege is part of the warp and woof of their system.

Again, if Mr. Pinchot is in favour of setting up government bureaucracies "to control all the basic natural resources of the nation," then I have completely misunderstood his programme. I was under the impression that the taking of rent would be the chief weapon for abolishing government bureaucracies; that the taxation of land-values is the only way that we can enjoy less and less government; and as for the attitude of the editors of the *Freeman*, I have always understood it to be that of reducing the State to a mere administrative force by expropriating rent, just what it was before rent went into the private pockets of landlords. Mr. Thomas seems neither to know what the State is, what socialism is, or what a radical is. I am afraid that he is trying to saddle on the editors of the *Freeman* a policy which I do not think, from the articles that I have read, the editors are at all inclined to accept. It has seemed clear to me from the first number of the *Freeman* that its editorial policy—not the policy of those who have contributed articles to the *Freeman*—has been singularly clear; that it is based upon the theory that those values created by the community should be used for the good of the community, and that the individual should enjoy the full value of his product. This is simple enough, and by no stretch of the imagination can it admit more government bureaucracies to operate anything. The *Freeman* has always most explicitly distinguished between the State and society, just the opposite of Mr. Thomas's implication. As to the *Freeman's* "complacent acceptance of the examples of economic action," as for instance "the international labour boycott of the White Terror in Hungary and British Labour's effective opposition to the Allied campaign against Soviet Russia," wherein is the fundamental policy vitiated? I was under the impression that these demonstrations were cited merely as a more effective way of bringing the lesson home to labour of its own power as an economic organization, than through any course of political action it could take. Am I right?

In conclusion, I should like to deal with Mr. Thomas's fears as to profit-seeking and personal gain. He says, "Though privilege might be abolished, profit-seeking would still remain the normal motive in all business transactions." What if it did? Who would be hurt by it? Let us assume that Richard Cobden was right when he said in the House of Commons that the abolition of privilege, brought about by the confiscation of rent, would mean that there would be always more jobs than men, and that the abolition of privilege would entail a free competitive system from the basis of production, all through the ramifications of industry, urban and rural, above and below the ground. What would labour have to fear from profit? Would not then labour's position be invincible against extortion of any kind; for it is extortion and usury that Mr. Thomas is thinking about when he uses the word profit. But, Sirs, labour will always pay capital what capital is worth to it. It does so now, even with the incubus of the landlord pocketing rent for his private use. Labour with privilege abolished has nothing to fear, and it will be only too glad to pay interest for the use of capital. A natural law under free conditions will maintain that principle, for the motive of mankind is to satisfy its desires and needs with the least exertion. And whenever labour can use capital, that part of wealth that aids in the production of more wealth, to lessen exertion and to save time, it will do so. When Mr. Thomas says, "There can be little hope of a better social order based on freedom and fellowship so long as the desire for personal gain is the chief motive in industry," he reveals himself as a sentimentalist who is more concerned with schemes of pauperization and all the other abominable adjuncts of paternalism, than he is with humanity. What personal gain under a system of equal opportunity can any labourer fear, when he is assured that he will get the full value of his product?

This very question of personal gain goes right down to the roots of an economic definition of value under a free system. It is desire that gives value. Therefore, personal gain will under such a system be a benefit to society; and this beyond the mere material benefits that will accrue to the race. More important than these is the cultural and artistic benefit that can only come to man when once more he enjoys his natural rights, a benefit as great at least as he enjoyed in the past, that past which through abundance and leisure enabled the folk of Europe during nearly 1000 years to raise up in archi-

ture, literature, painting, sculpture, music, poetry and drama a grandeur that has not been surpassed. I am, etc.,
Chicago, Ill.

RICHARD CLAUGHTON.

FLYING FOR A FALL.

SIRS: In view of the oft repeated declaration of a Senator from New Mexico that the Mexicans are greatly in need of civilization and modern ideas, which panacea the Senator would apply in the form of intervention and retention, the following clipping from *Excelsior* of Mexico City dated 13 August 1920, may be of interest. The translation is as follows:

The Mexican Government invites the Aerial Navigation Companies to submit bids for passenger and express service in the Republic of Mexico. Signed: General Pascual Ortiz Rubio, *Secretary of Communications and Public Works*, Mexico City, 29 July, 1920.

I am, etc.,

Humboldt, Tenn.

JOHN E. KELLY.

DEFINING "AUTHORIZED."

SIRS: "Authorized agent" of the *de facto* Russian Government would appear to be a title difficult of attainment in some instances; in others it is one that is likely to be conferred without warning. Thus the much initialed name of Mr. Martens has never appeared in the daily press without being coupled with terms such as "so-called," "alleged," "self-styled," "unauthorized," in order to convey the meaning that sinister tactics are concealed behind the Muscovite gentleman's efforts to place contracts for railway locomotives with United States manufacturers. Furtherance of its commerce by a representative of a foreign country appears therefore to be sufficient grounds for referring to him as being "unauthorized."

However, where persons of Russian extraction are suspected of being incriminated in events of a more lawless nature, no less an authority than a leading metropolitan newspaper makes it clear that the opposite usage is correct. "Authorized agents of the Lenin-Trotsky Bolshevik regime in Russia, it was believed to-day, are behind the series of outrages directed against priests and members of the Russian Orthodox Church," was the introductory sentence in accounts of what is masterfully described as a "near riot" at the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in New York in the *New York Sun* and *Herald* of 16 August.

This solution to the annoying question of just what constitutes an "authorized agent" of the Russian Government, is an achievement in definition for which students of international relations will doubtless be grateful. I am, etc.,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

L. B. N. GNAEDINGER.

TIME WILL TELL.

SIRS: I should like a little more enlightenment on the course you would advocate for economic pressure on a political government without a political party. Disgusted years ago with both old parties I accepted the position of Illinois State Chairman for the Committee of Forty-eight and consequently read Mr. Amos Pinchot's very able defence of their movement and your comments on it with great interest. I would add right here to the obsequies that in my opinion Mr. Dudley Field Malone, alone of all the friends and foes who have rushed into print on the subject, strikes the nail on the head in his recent article in your pages, in ascribing the fiasco at Chicago as being largely due to unpreparedness on the part of the Committee. A few New York intellectuals, so-called, who thought they could found a National party from their swivel chairs in Manhattan, refused to listen to my suggestion that they should transfer their headquarters to Chicago where through daily meetings with the leaders of other movements an amalgamation could have been affected. We all knew that there were differences but had sufficient time been taken for it, instead of leaving everything till the last minute for the floor of a convention, a temporarily useful union of forces could have been brought about. Nothing but poor management sealed their fate!

But to come back to my question. How can economic pressure be brought upon a Government? If you refer to the British Labour party which seems at times to be successful in impressing its demands upon the British Government, my answer is that they fail as frequently as they succeed and what is more important, have failed with their really most crucial demands—besides they had to develop into a political party before they achieved scarcely anything and they will have to become a majority party before they will be able to carry out their programme in its entirety. And with what would you compare the British Labour party in this country? Where is our economic organization fit to bring

pressure? Certainly not the A. F. of L.—an organization that pretends not to be in politics but seems to be “tammanyized” under the most sinister influences.

I should be grateful for an expression of your ideas as to the kind of organization you have in mind that would be strong enough to function successfully without votes and political pressure. It is claimed that the co-operative movement can be kept non-political and that it will furnish the pressure. What does a politician care about any movement that can not talk to him in terms of party votes? And watch and see what will happen to the co-operative movement should it threaten to become popular enough to run foul of our Invisible Government! The Visible Government will be quickly utilized to put an end to it. I am, etc.,
Chicago, Illinois.

FRED RAWITZER.

THE THEATRE.

THE FRANCO-AMERICANS.

It is perhaps one of the worst faults of American criticism that it persists in upbraiding or praising the genre of the work of a playwright or an artist of the theatre, instead of seeking to understand and interpret each individual *étude* of the artist as it is disclosed. The proponent of the drama of ideas hangs his hat and his whole mental approbation on each new play by Bernard Shaw; the opponent of such a drama deposits his critical tin-cans on the same peg and in the same spirit. Every time he opens his lips, Gordon Craig is hailed or damned simply as the embodiment of a theory; not as an artist who does good work now, poor work again, and something supremely significant on a third occasion. Even George Cohan has become the traditional whipping-boy of dramatic jazz to such an extent that a pungent piece of satire like his “Seven Keys to Baldpate” passes all but unnoticed by our critical dons.

There need be no wonder, therefore, if Eugène Brieux’s new comedy, “The Americans in France,” which Lee Shubert and Leo Ditrichstein have rather strangely entrusted to the callous mercies of an August thermometer, should be used as a football between those who are loyal and those who are agnostic concerning the thesis-drama. Brieux more than Shaw or the Ibsen of the 'eighties, has devoted himself to this type of play. His purpose in the theatre is thus confessed in his preface to his most recent volume in English: “The problems which I have studied I am sure I have not brought to their final solutions. My ambition was to draw and keep the attention of honest people on them by means of the theatre.” To complain time after time against a motive so firmly fixed, is rather like baying the moon; and to use the new play to advance or retard the fortunes of the propagandist drama, is only to ignore unjustly its individual identity.

If we recognize the fact that “The Americans in France” is dramatic propaganda, and pass by the question whether the thesis-play can be considered as art or not, the new comedy assumes interest for its own sake as a sociological argument and as a study of the use of theses in dramatic construction. Brieux’s dialectic concerns not only the French but also their visitors from overseas, and the personal, non-political side of the relationship between the two nations. It is therefore significant on this side of the Atlantic as well as the other. Moreover, the methods which the playwright has used to present his arguments and enforce his points, are so ingenious that they will interest others beside the mere student of dramatic technique.

The case which Brieux makes out concerning Franco-American affiliations is not one-sided. It is

propaganda, but it is at least disinterested propaganda. It has nothing in common with the self-centred flattery on which a sheep-like public has permitted itself to be fed in every country by official press-bureaux, both during the war and ever since. Despite the fact that the play was written primarily for French audiences, Brieux finds more faults, and more serious faults, with his compatriots than with their guests. In reality, of course, when we remember his purpose in the theatre, it is evident that he has been more relentless with the French just because he was writing for them. If he had been equally concerned with correcting American faults, he might have found more phases of our character and our methods to criticize. The result of the playwright’s passion, for truth and for honesty, therefore, is a drama which is neither pro-French nor pro-American, neither anti-French nor anti-American. It exposes the shortcomings of both and extols the talents of both, with disinterested frankness and tolerance; and it should prove a salutary corrective of both provincial self-praise and provincial race-antipathy.

The *milieu* which Brieux has chosen for “The Americans in France” has largely obviated one of the most serious embarrassments of the thesis-drama. Usually the propagandist in the theatre has to erect a dummy opponent for his protagonist and mouthpiece to attack and overcome. To the extent to which this expedient is unnecessary, the thesis-play stands a chance of living on as drama and as art, after its immediate sociological purpose is achieved. “Blanchette” and “The Red Robe” will be remembered for this reason after “Damaged Goods” is forgotten. Almost invariably, however, Brieux has had to resort to his “straw man,” for his plays have always dealt with the limited confines of French characters and a French setting.

In the new comedy, on the other hand, the necessary conflict of viewpoint is ready-made. Let an American soldier so much as talk about the weather with a French landed proprietor, and each one reveals his own admirable qualities while he is exposing the deficiencies of the other. Each race in its inherent character is the natural critic of the other. It should be interesting to the Americans who were irritated by the French and didn’t quite know why, to see that Brieux has gone for his explanation beyond the superficial clash over prices arising out of tradesmen’s exorbitances and doughboys’ extravagances.

Free play for the most natural characteristics of the two races is gained by setting the comedy in the post-war period when artificially excited passions had subsided. Captain Smith of the A. E. F., wishes to install modern irrigation-methods on the estate of the Charvets in Burgundy. Henri Charvet, mothered from infancy by his sister Henriette, has fallen in love with Nellie Brown, a nurse in the American Red Cross, and for her he gives up the marriage that had been arranged for him by his family. That is all there is to the story; but Brieux manages to make this juxtaposition of the two nations serve his ends. The captain in khaki is roused to protest against the deadening respect of the French for the past, and their disregard for the rights and opportunities of the future; a thesis which Brieux has plied before with less vigorous assistance. When Henriette tries to block the way to her lover, Nellie in turn with equal frankness indicts the degrading system of dowry and the suffocating sentimentality by which the French family tradition overrides the individual personality. Conversely, the Charvets, stirred to self-defence by their more

aggressive guests, retort upon the enslaving effects of the Taylor system of "scientific management"; upon our disregard for beauty and sentiment where efficiency is to be gained; upon the tendency of the American woman to arrange the career of her husband and upon our general artlessness bordering on lack of taste.

"The Americans in France," despite its novel construction and its function as a mutual critique of the two nations, can not stand among Brieux's masterpieces. Perhaps that is because he has taken the pains to develop only the character of Henriette with minute care; or possibly because his theme is rapidly losing deep significance. Under the stimulus of common danger, France and America were brought into close communion. To-day the mood of isolation seems to be returning, and with it a tendency to ignore the obstacles to complete understanding, rather than to face and overcome them.

OLIVER M. SAYLER.

MISCELLANY.

MIDDLE-AGED students of the high cost of living must sometimes think longingly of the good old days of the free-lunch counter; when for a few cents and a trifle of cheek one could enjoy a hearty meal in any first-class hotel on Broadway. In those happy days the sybarite could get on in fashionable places on fifty cents a day for food no matter where he might be roomed; whether in a hall-bedroom at \$2.50 per week, or on a high scale of magnificence in a front or back bedroom, "with or without," in a boarding house within the confines of Respectabilia which bordered the old Tenderloin. He could saunter into the Vendome or the St. James or the old Fifth Avenue, and do himself very well indeed on a glass of beer, a cocktail, or a milk-and-seltzer. He could seat himself at a table, beckon to a real waiter, call for his drink, and ask for a few samples of "the viands you have spread out over there," and the real waiter would grant his request with something more than union alacrity, and for a tip of a nickel return him a gracious smile. The dear old days! gone, never to return. Yes, life was worth living then, and people really lived. Once for \$1.50—think of it!—five persons, four of them hungry, sat at a table in the Hoffman House, and enjoyed each a drink and a square meal, and the waiter was most affable throughout. Indeed on parting he urged them pleasantly to come again.

WHAT is civilization, when you have to pay at a place of most moderate distinction at least a quarter for a baked apple, and ten cents extra for a spoonful of cream—and withal no smile from the waitress? How absurd to enter into a discussion of food-values and the dietetic qualities of the apple. Life is not wholly expressed in calories; at least congenial life is not. Calories connote the *porte-malheur*, the prohibitionist, Mr. Palmer, martial law and other such dampers of the jocund spirit.

BUT there is more to it than this; for with the passing of the free-lunch counter there is gone the clever debonair race of men who were particular about the places where they ate and the way their food was served. Almost any day of the week might be found between the hours of eleven and one, in the bar-rooms of Broadway's big hotels, a sprinkling of men connected with the drama, literature, journalism and art who were always ready to crack a joke and take a drink, with whatever might go with both; generous souls who spent it when they had it, but whether they had it to spend or no, loved life and lived it for its own sake. Where are they now, those warm-hearted fellows who looked so debonair on meagre wardrobes—many of them at times the *matinée* idols of a vanished race of women who would have scoffed at the movies, preferring flesh to film? What names must

come to the mind of the man of middle life who knew his Broadway well, say, twenty-five or thirty years ago!

IN those days the man of business, the scientist, the doctor and lawyer would be found in the company of artists, glad to be in close touch with them and to dispense their quips and sallies to an ever widening circle. On one occasion I recall four well-known dramatic critics and a famous inventor together at the bar of the St. James Hotel, sampling the liquor and free-lunch trimmings with all the gusto of connoisseurs. What raconteurs they were! the things they talked about, the subjects they were familiar with, the celebrities they had met, amazed the stranger and delighted the heart of the hero-worshipper. One of them had met Ibsen face to face; another knew Anatole France; another had shaken Verdi by the hand; and Albert S. was in Venice when Wagner died and went on to Bayreuth with the body.

IT sounds like a saga now to speak of those men who gathered round the free-lunch bar in the good old days of thirty years ago. Who meets anybody now? Still, Government must have something to do even if it be but to make austere consideration of our health and morals—not that there were lacking people in that day who would have us wiser but sadder men. The middle-aged must remember how Broadway was affected by Dr. Parkhurst and the Raines-law sandwich, that dusty, fly-specked legal tender that forced a man to eat when he only wanted to drink. One thinks of the famous cardboard sandwich that Charlie J., the artist, carried about with him for months. He made it himself and painted it himself, and wherever he produced it, the house felt secure that the law was not infringed. Was it not as honest and more humorous to carry a counterfeit sandwich in your breast-pocket than to carry a loaded flask on your hip? Who can impeach the morality of the old days? Has the contraband flask so wonderfully improved and regenerated our social life and manners, elevated our companionships and purged the dross out of our ethics? *Si quaeris, circumspice.*

THE always witty and always equable gentleman who runs the delightful Miscellany column in the *Manchester Guardian* rather let himself go the other day in a paragraph of comment conceived in somewhat sharper vein than is his wont, thus: "The *tu quoque* is a notoriously poor form of argument, but one is really driven to it by the New York *World's* comment on the Mannix farce, that we have 'moved a long way from the time when Britain did not fear agitators.' This, from a leading journal of a nation which can no longer, even in speech, distinguish a liberal from a revolutionary, which lately deported a whole ship-load of emigrants on political grounds, which keeps in gaol a Socialist candidate for the Presidency and unseats Socialist members of legislatures by the batch! Fear agitators, forsooth!" As an amateur at the pleasant sport of running a Miscellany column, I should like to pay my admiring respects to my Manchester brother and to grant him on this occasion, as on so many others, "a hit, a very palpable hit."

THE ebbing tide of inter-allied propaganda has left a slimy debris of know-nothingism on the beach. One of the choicest examples of the muck which the beach-combers of journalism have been raking over lately in London is the great world-contest that is now supposed to be going on between the Jews and the Jesuits. Abroad, the know-nothing party had been making dreadful inroads into common sense even before the war; various mysticisms and pseudo-sciences spawned prolifically in recent years from an incubating ground situated rather appropriately at the hither end of Fleet Street, and the jelly-fish of occult thought wrapped many a hardy swimmer in its viscous, pulpy embrace and stung him into silence. The newer know-nothingism, however, is of a different order; for it harks back to the yelping political foolishness of the old American tradition.

ANYWHERE in London you will hear, I am told, serious discussion on the relative strength of the two "secret and sinister forces," the Jesuits and the Jews, among people whom you have no other reason for suspecting to be quite mad. You will learn that a sort of general election is being held throughout the world under a new two-party system, and that some bright day when you're not looking for trouble you may be giving a decisive vote to a Jew or a Jesuit. These two great brotherhoods, it seems, have been having a great scrap over the League of Nations. The Jesuits, you see, are the bureaucrats and the Jews are the cosmopolitan financiers, and the question is apparently whether the insignia of the League of Nations (the dear old League!) is to be a spool of red tape or the three golden balls of Lombardy. Clouds of bituminous rumour convey the news that the Jesuits have captured the secretariat, and the same wind brings tidings that the Jews are about to precipitate a financial crisis in order to recover their prestige.

IN the thick of all this, the estimable *Morning Post* attempts to cleanse the atmosphere by showing in a series of incomparably funny articles, which will long remain a reproof to those who talk about the English lack of a sense of humour, that the unrest of labour from the time of the French Revolution onward has been the work of a mysterious junta of Jews, who, through the last three centuries, have been carrying on a plot to overthrow the Christian world by force. Working through Trotzky and Lenin (the latter's Semitic origin is obvious because of the fact that he changed his name) this junta is now threatening to rob the Western nations of the fruits of the Allied victory. People who dislike comic extravagance will take refuge from this entertaining fantasy in the serener pages of *Punch*; but those who feared that the English are taking the Jewish-Jesuit duel too seriously will thank the *Post* for tiding them over a period of midsummer madness.

JOURNEYMAN.

BOOKS.

IN PRAISE OF PUCK.

HE too is older than the Sphinx. He watched the pyramids building; in the tomb of Khelmis, singer of Osiris, he slept, while two hundred generations of men lived and laboured and died; in China and in Java and in Burma and in Siam old men and children ministered to him; he showed Plato the shadow-worlds which picture for mankind a far-off heaven and the hells burning in their hearts; with Christ he suffered on the cross, and died, and was born again; he was the playmate of Shakespeare's childhood, and he taught Goethe the wisdom of Faust; on his bent back the sorrows of the world rest; in his eyes is laughter, on his lips a song that never dies; he sprang from the heart of the people; he is the father of the gods; and his name is Punch.

His first biography in English—the first native biography of its oldest god in a civilization for incomprehensible reasons inordinately vain—has just been written by one American and published by another; and these two, Helen Haiman Joseph and B. W. Huebsch, have made their "Book of Marionettes" a treasure and a keepsake for children of all ages. In these magical pages is written that the oldest of the gods has for his latest incarnation put on the green and golden livery of that sprite who knows "what fools these mortals be," and has chosen for his newest place of avatar this Unlikely Land. Where else indeed should he find richer cause for laughter and for tears? So it is in Cleveland and Chicago and New York, yes, even on Broadway itself, that to-day you will find

Puck, whom our grandfathers called Pulcinella and theirs Ra; for his is a high and ancient lineage. And it may well be that the names of Ellen Van Volkenburg, who first restored him to his rightful place of worship in this country, and of Lillian Owen and Tony Sarg and Grace Treat, who have bravely seconded her work, will be held in living remembrance when those of George M. Cohan and the Barrymores and Belasco himself are no longer mighty enough to set even the boarding-school miss agape; for "so the whirligig of time brings in its revenge," and the star of Bernhardt fades while those of Signoret and Caran d'Ache and Rivière grow yearly brighter.

If you do not believe me—and there is no particular reason why you should, and one excellent reason why you should not—hear what Anatole France himself has to say on the matter:

I love marionettes. (They) resemble the Egyptian hieroglyphics; (they are) mysterious and pure; and, when they represent a drama of Shakespeare or Aristophanes, I think I see the thoughts of the poet being unrolled in sacred characters upon the walls of the temple. Exquisite things are doubly exquisite when they are unaffected. I am infinitely thankful to them for having replaced living actors.

And then listen to Goethe:

He who would work for the stage should leave nature in her proper place and take careful heed not to have recourse to anything but what may be performed by children with puppets upon boards and laths.

For—it is Anatole France again who speaks—"the actors spoil the play for me. I mean the good actors, their talent is too great." And in their place once more, as how many times before—in Egypt and in Greece and in mediæval Europe—Gordon Craig sees the Master Puppet, guided by "the wires which stretch from Divinity to the soul of the poet." "They come from far away," Ernest Maindron writes:

They have been the joy of innumerable generations which preceded our own; they have made them laugh, they have made them think; they have had eminent protectors; for them celebrated authors have written. At all times they have enjoyed a liberty of manners and language which has rendered them dear to the people.

"Everywhere," says Mrs. Joseph, "puppets have originated among the common people: they are primarily an expression of popular taste. The very *naïveté* of the dolls has been developed into an exquisite and unique art." There is one way—it was Gordon Craig who said it—there is one way by which the world may become young again; it is for children to go to school with Puck.

In the next edition of her book Mrs. Joseph would still further increase the indebtedness of her readers, if to her unique puppet-bibliography she added fuller details of the place and date of publication of many of the items which she lists, and if she included one or two advanced chapters on modern puppet-technique and equipment; the present chapters on these branches of her subject are excellent for those to whom they are addressed, the amateur, the parent, the teacher and the child, but there is also to-day in America a continually and rapidly increasing public composed in large measure of graduates in puppetry, and these are eager for further instruction that may lead toward post-mastership in their craft. A chapter too on those magical *Krippen* of Munich as well and as fully illustrated as the rest of the book, would richly enhance its value.

On one point alone perhaps may issue rightfully be taken with the author, and that is on the attention she gives to the—soi-disant—"Kunstler Marionetten

¹ "A Book of Marionettes." Helen Haiman Joseph. New York: B. W. Huebsch.

Theater" of Munich, while comparatively neglecting the beautiful and suggestive work of the Misses Janssen at Solln hard by. Herr Brann's Munich puppeteers are without doubt technically most expert, and he has advertised them (and himself) with astonishing skill, but æsthetically they are of no importance, while the Misses Janssen, whom Herr Brann has consistently attempted to belittle and impede, have opened whole new fields of art to the European puppet, those fields harvested for so many centuries with such un-failing richness in the countries of the East. If, as is rumoured, European puppets and their puppeteers are shortly to be brought to this country, it would be well for their sponsors to find out beforehand from those who have studied them at first hand, whose are the most interesting and significant.

With the æsthetics of puppetry Mrs. Joseph does not, alas, deal, except by implication; but she provides enough material for a whole new volume. Will she not write it herself, and at once—the first book in English devoted exclusively to the æsthetics of an art older than the theatre itself, older indeed than history as we know it? It would be a fascinating book, as fascinating as this first volume. The main conclusions which she would draw may perhaps be surmised with reasonable accuracy. She would, I think, wave aside as æsthetically unimportant those merely mechanical developments, past and future, of the puppet, which are so perilously tempting to the beginner in the craft and to the ingeniously-minded, and would focus her attention on the artistic principles that underlay the work of the old shadow-makers in the far East and of such European puppeteers as Richard Teschner and the masters of the *Chat Noir*, principles which to-day in this country Miss Van Volkenburg is endeavouring to rediscover and embody in such of her productions as "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "The Little Mermaid." Miss Van Volkenburg maintains, if I understand her aright, that these principles rest, at least in part, on the observed fact that certain actions, such as those of individual men walking, can always be better performed on the stage by human beings than by puppets, and on the consequent deduction that such actions are therefore not proper to puppets except for purposes of burlesque, whereas other actions, such as mass movement or the flight of swallows and of fairies, can always be better performed on the stage by puppets than by human beings and are therefore proper, not to the latter, but to the former in their own right; furthermore, she argues, convention and elimination, which are basic principles of art, "work" with puppets as they do not—or rarely—"work" with human beings; in other words, the realistic puppet belongs only to the world of burlesque, a delightful enough world in its way but not a world of wide horizons, whereas the imaginative puppet is in its own æsthetic right master of a world whose horizons are fixed only by the personal limitations in vision or in skill of its creator. It is obvious that, in the presence of such considerations as these, the old categories of the theatre lose at least something of their academic validity. Can it be that the theatre itself would correspondingly gain? The answer, it would seem, is autographically written by the great puppet-masters of Java and Siam in their work. Will not Mrs. Joseph attempt a detailed examination of these and other such æsthetic problems? In so doing she might bring even Gordon Craig to recognize the possibility of women contributing something to the theatre.

And meanwhile it is pleasant to remember that puppetry, which is a folk-art, has always flourished in times of corrupt oligarchies and political oppression; even an all-powerful attorney-general might hesitate at imprisoning, torturing, or deporting a puppet which offended his susceptibilities; it would savour a little too ludicrously of *Jabberwockwohl snarkismus*—not that in this Unlikely Land, anything is impossible. Still, there are improbable improbabilities, and for the present puppet-persecution is one of them; so it is possible that a new form of Bolshevik propaganda—as of course it will be, though, unaccountably (unless it be due to her insidiousness), Mrs. Joseph does not refer to Russian puppets—will shortly become apparent in the Country of the Forgotten Constitution.

And, side by side with this—for burlesque and beauty have a way of going hand in hand—it may be hoped that indigenous American puppet-art, already so auspiciously come to birth, may grow into a thing of its own loveliness and ritual, fit worthily to house gods older than those of our canon. Punch in his latest incarnation has added to his universal humanity and humour an ironic tenderness, a wistful and delicious charm, that come near to bringing the Anglo-Saxon puppet-world into harmony with the Latin or the Burmese. American puppetry has no traditional Guignol; its pantheon is empty; in the Unlikely Land what better father for its gods could be found or begotten than he "who knows not what it is to die," he at whose antics "the whole quire" of gods and mortals "hold their lips and laugh," Oberon's Jester, the immortal man-god Puck?

His beauty does not change or fade, his wit grows never wearisome, his muscles never tire, over the immutable mask of his face no fleeting expression passes and is gone; he is not of to-morrow or yesterday or to-day, but abides unchanging in the unending Now; the ephemeral passes him by, and he is not stirred; it permeates him, and touches him not; all the sorrows and happiness of the world dwell in his expressionless and vacant eyes; he is that emptiness into which we pour all that is we, all that may not elsewhere nor in other wise be made immortal. We live for an hour, posturing upon the boards of our little stage; we know not the manner of our exits and our entrances, nor the next scene, nor the lines spoken for us by another, nor whose the Hand that holds our strings, nor when nor how the curtain shall fall. Vainly we clutch at our control. But always in our hearts there burns a fierce and tyrannical yearning, an instinct and a passion and a cry, to immortalize the moment of our suffering or our joy, because it is so fair. That immortal instant is beauty. Puck is our immortality.

MAURICE BROWNE.

THE SUPERSOUL AND MR. CANNAN.

FLASHES of fine thought are not incompatible with loose thinking. A book may be very stimulating and suggestive in its details and yet as a whole leave behind an impression of hopeless confusion. This is just the kind of book Mr. Cannan has produced.¹ Guidance it may give, but only by starting new trains of thought in him who can do his own thinking, while to him who expects and needs a reasonably coherent map of life it is about as helpful as one of those old charts on which fanciful aquatic monsters disport themselves among lost or undiscovered continents.

The trouble seems to lie in Mr. Cannan's devotion to mysticism, which he describes as "the only faculty through which men can attain their full stature," and in

¹ "The Release of the Soul." Gilbert Cannan. New York: Boni & Liveright.

his corresponding contempt for "the strange deceptions and treacheries of the brain." Now, as I see it, the brain or the intellect—to use Mr. Cannan's more frequent term for our rationalizing faculty—has been developed for the purpose of saving us from just the kind of confusion into which Mr. Cannan is constantly falling. It can not fathom the ultimate mysteries of life. It is likely to be misled by false reports from the senses and to be upset by the insistency of the emotions. It has limitations of many kinds. But it does tell us when we are trying to turn twice two into five.

Of course, I believe in the value as well as the existence of intuition. But I have no patience with those who believe that it can be put to practical use without the aid of the intellect. I believe also in the validity of that attitude of mind to which we generally give the name of mysticism, but only as something that supplements the rational study of the universe without taking its place. I am as keenly alive as any one to the presence in our existence of certain unknown and probably unknowable principles, and I realize that, in dealing with them, our vocabulary must necessarily be vague and our mutual difficulty of understanding enhanced far beyond the ordinary. But in the inevitability of these conditions I can find no warrant for wilful shuffling of the few definitions that have gained a fairly widespread acceptance among thinking men in all countries. Let me give you a few quotations to indicate more clearly the object of my protests:

If imagination can not work on them [the bed-rock facts of existence] invention can and does.

The imagination only works at the bidding of the spirit: the invention is the slave and the flatterer of the brain.

The imagination is simply that power in the human mind which perceives and establishes relationships.

The weary mind is refreshed and . . . can separate itself from the brain and put an end to that organ's usurpations.

The spirit if thwarted will not abdicate but, laying aside the imagination, will take refuge with the sense of humour.

The æsthetic emotion, that keen sentinel which warns the emotions, passions, intellect and spirit of a human being of the approach of the soul.

The spirit of man is the faculty in him, a sublimation of all his faculties, keener, finer and greater than either his mind or his brain or his heart, by which he is able to affirm or to deny the soul.

The spirit of man lives, once it moves out of life, in the soul, as the egg of a fish lives in the sea.

I have already quoted Mr. Cannan's mention of mysticism as a human "faculty," apparently to be dovetailed somewhere into the hierarchy suggested by the sequel of quotations just given; intellect or brain, invention, mind, æsthetic emotion, sense of humour, imagination, spirit, soul. Heaven knows that we know little enough about the exact make-up and all too inexact working of our what-you-may-call-'ems, but I doubt whether our knowledge will be increased or our practice improved by shaking terms in one hat and facts in another and then pulling them out, lottery-fashion, in random pairs.

The full brilliancy of Mr. Cannan's verbal *escamoterie* is not perceived, however, until you analyse his conception of the soul—of the idea, that is, lying at the very centre of his argument: the thing to be "released" for the world's salvation. The soul as a separate entity, continuing to exist after the dissolution of all the rest, is an old idea that persists among us to this very day, and that may or may not prove valid in the end. Leaving a few astral excursions alone, the soul has always, so far, been supposed to dwell within the human being to whom it belonged—or who belonged to it. But Mr. Cannan's soul is something lying outside of man as well as of God. It is also juxtaposed to life, while between it and God we find love. Let me quote once more:

Life enters into a man in the moment of his conception, bringing with it ideas and memories into which the soul, smiling at the joke of another man-child being born, does not enter.

It would be nothing to the soul if life were to cease for ever.

No man or woman has a soul that he can call his or hers.

The soul, like everything else, can not be possessed, but the human heart in love can be possessed by it.

The soul is not God.

Even the soul does not see God, but has to pass through another medium, which is love, that again passing through other media for which there are no names.

The soul has no activity except in love, for the soul is an emanation from love, which is nearest to God, as life is farthest.

Pay particular attention to the last two quotations, please, and then turn to the following:

More than any other relationship, the love of a man and a woman cries for the support of the soul.

Consider the reference above to the soul's utter indifference not only to ideas and memories, but to all life, and then read this passage:

The imagination once become active, must be followed into more and more intense experiences, for only experience is real, only experience is saluted and permeated by the soul, and through the soul by love.

There may be people who can read such things with trustful comprehension not only of the immediate phrase; but of the whole line of thought—of the world-image that must lie behind the words, if the words are to have any meaning at all. I envy them, for I can not.

In spite of serious and sympathetic study, given to Mr. Cannan's book because of what his name stands for, I have come away hopelessly puzzled. What is the soul he speaks of? Where is it to be found? How does it exist? Is it a force, a principle or a personality? Is it an intermediary only between man and God, through love, or does it bear a similar relationship to the rest of the universe? And what is love, as pictured by Mr. Cannan?

These are vital questions, springing from no desire to argue or to assert my own views, but from a desire that seems to assume the power of a passion: the desire to understand. In my case at least, Mr. Cannan has failed to convey the understanding that ought to form the basis of his whole book as a plea for better life and better living. Its failure in this respect is to me the most essential thing about it.

Like many others, I am inclined to distrust too closely woven philosophical systems. And I am keenly aware of the stultifying effect of the letter. But systems represent, after all, practical efforts to deal with a sadly confused and confusing universe. In so far as they are tentative and flexible, they are as helpful as so many tools. They rest, in the last instance, on words, and on human agreement as to the proper use of words. To obtain a common understanding of a word is to get a step nearer understanding life itself—although we had better cherish no illusions as to the length and importance of that step.

He who traverses common verbal usage without substituting a clearer and more deeply founded usage may not hinder the progress of the race, but that he will help it seems more than doubtful. Freely developed individuality is as essential in the field of thought as elsewhere, but loose and reckless thinking has no more to do with originality than a cyclone has to do with a brisk furthering sea breeze. In the field of thought, as elsewhere, order is a no less essential element than progress or flexibility. And order calls inexorably for discipline, for team work, for a partial submission of the individual to the group of which he forms a part. Mr. Cannan is, I fear, a hopeless maverick. As such he is interesting, of course, and will always have his admirers. But just now the world calls for co-ordinated, self-suppressing endeavour as it has never done before.

EDWIN BJÖRKMÄN.

A CHEMIST'S VIEWPOINT.

AMONG the investigators of radioactive substances Professor Frederick Soddy shares with possibly half a dozen men a position of pre-eminence. To the general public he is best known through his readable little book on "Matter and Energy" in the Home University Library. A collection of popular essays¹ by a writer of such scientific distinction and expository skill naturally challenges

¹ Science and Life. Frederick Soddy. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

attention. Only two of the studies in this recent volume are definitely informational in character. "The Evolution of Matter" reviews with lucidity the revelations inaugurated by Becquerel's discovery that the element uranium spontaneously and continually emitted a new kind of radiation analogous to Röntgen's X-rays. A somewhat longer article on "The Conception of the Chemical Element as enlarged by the Study of Radioactive Change" is quite hopelessly beyond the depth of an ordinary reader. This is especially regrettable because in one or two of its pages Dr. Soddy explains with admirable brevity and clearness the very thing the intelligent layman is most eager to know, viz., what precisely constitutes the modern scientist's notion of an element. Dr. Soddy traces the historical development of that conception, showing how the criteria gradually shifted from purely chemical ones to such not necessarily involving chemical considerations at all. Chemical analysis, in other words, has proved to be not necessarily "the most fundamental and searching kind of material analysis," for unique radioactive character does not always coincide with unique chemical character.

The remainder of "Science and Life" falls into a quite different category. It consists for the most part of articles and addresses published and delivered during the years of the author's professorship at the University of Aberdeen.

In their totality these papers are interesting as manifestations of an average high-grade British scientist's mentality. Professor Soddy's most salient trait, outside the field in which he has given ample evidence of original power, is a rugged sanity of judgment, which, however, does not prevent him from reflecting in somewhat commonplace fashion the scientific guild's estimate of its own importance to the body politic. It would presumably be almost superhuman for a chemist not to make the most of the *argumentum ad hominem* provided by the practical utility of exact science during the recent war, although the author makes it sufficiently clear that he himself is interested in quite other than its destructive aspects. There is also much excuse for insisting that science teaching shall come into its own, that the science teacher shall have leisure for research, and that science by no means represents an ogre hostile to all higher human aspirations.

Nevertheless, though some truths may require iteration and re-iteration to gain acceptance, their incessant repetition provides indifferent entertainment for the reader. From this point of view one is tempted to wish for more individuality of treatment in Professor Soddy's contentions, which differ little if at all from those of Professor Ostwald or any one of half a dozen other spokesmen of the profession. More particularly, one wishes for a more searching critique of the bland assumption that the superiority of science to the humanities follows directly from its contributions to material weal. Perhaps the conclusion will ultimately stand, but assuredly it must be argued on broader ground; and it is certainly somewhat naïve to assume that the scientist must necessarily be accepted by society at his own valuation.

Given his lack of metaphysical subtlety, Professor Soddy can not be expected to say anything particularly new or enlightening on the relation of religion and science. Indeed, the essay devoted to that theme is singularly pointless. On the other hand, Dr. Soddy is refreshingly clear and sound in his discussions of the relation of science and democracy. He insists that there shall be some adaptation of natural ability to life-work unless the modern state is to remain "a heterogeneous collection of individuals rather than a community." We must no longer "delight in racing cart-horses and leaving Derby winners to haul coal." To an American liberal this sort of talk has an ominous ring, for it seems to re-echo the neo-aristocratic prating of pseudo-scientists equally incompetent as leaders of men and as hewers of wood. But in the present instance he may be reassured,

Dr. Soddy's heart is in the right place. Undaunted by words, he does not scruple to point out that science is hostile to the spirit of exclusive acquisitiveness and individual ownership. "Though the contributor of the last mite of knowledge usually gets popular credit for the whole discovery, the advance of science as a whole is entirely bound up with this communism of its inheritance."

But Dr. Soddy is not content with such generic phrases. He has the audacity to come out in open support of the British Labour party. Examining their ideals he finds that they are by no means utopian in the light of recent scientific achievement, and he quotes with approbation the party's programme for the promotion of scientific and other cultural aims. Yet the author now occupies a chair at Oxford, currently rated as the hotbed of British conservatism. Surely not all tradition is bad, and it is no slight advantage to work in a country that has a tradition of culture and free speech and political sense.

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

SHORTER NOTICES.

THOSE who have cast an observant eye over the exterior of the desiccated American saloon will have noticed the half-hearted manner in which the order to remove beer and whiskey signs has been executed. Sometimes the lettering has been painted over, with the incriminating words still faintly adumbrated beneath. Sometimes it has been pried off, and sometimes shielded from public gaze by a strip of board nailed over the iniquity. Apparently, however, the restriction applied to the exterior of saloons has not yet been extended to include the exterior of books, for we find Theodore Maynard's anthology of drinking songs undisguisedly labelled "A Tankard of Ale."¹ Possibly the exemption is a courtesy to our quondam ally, Great Britain, which enjoys a monopoly of the anthology. For, observes Mr. Maynard, although there are some good American drinking songs, "a Prohibitionist nation does not deserve to be represented in the jolliest book in the world." This designation of the book savours of hyperbole, of course, from the American point of view, but the collection—spanning the period from the fifteenth century to the present day—is sufficiently comprehensive and sufficiently gay for all practical and abstemious purposes. There are more than a hundred titles in the compilation, enabling Shakespeare to clink glasses with Chesterton, and Scott with Masefield. It is to be noted that the earlier singers seem closer to the brew; these imbibing bards of a later day are more conscious in their adulation; they want to drink their toast and have it, too.

L. B.

In this day and generation two thousand lines and more of blank verse is a long poem. And two thousand lines is the approximate length of "The Roamer," which occupies two-thirds of Mr. Woodberry's latest volume of verse.² The theme is concerned with the progress of the human soul and the final discovery of peace and security within itself after the experiencing of doubts, sorrows, and the vicissitudes of life. It is easy to describe the theme thus glibly, but in the poet's mind it is conceived with a high seriousness and deserves consideration in the same mood on the part of the reader. Mr. Woodberry's lines are penned with such precision, dignity, and grace, and express so noble an enterprise, that one feels they should not be allowed to perish without protest. And yet they fail to stir. Is it that Mr. Woodberry is too much merely the inheritor of Victorian maladies and philosophies? He is involved in struggles of the spirit, and the theme of his poetry, his values, his standards come upon a time that has found other solutions for the problems that fill his mind. Moreover, he has been captured by the appeal of tradition rather than by the appeal of beauty and his verse is reminiscent of the "dear dead lilies" of English poetry. Finally, his is poetry that is, for us, too conscious of its oracular, prophetic office and of its almost flawless technique. The "other poems" in the book are, in the main, sonnets, of which several are concerned with the past war. They achieve an appropriate air of gravity and distinction. The volume concludes with a few lyrics, which strike on the ear with greater spontaneity than anything else in the book.

L. M. R.

¹"A Tankard of Ale." Compiled by Theodore Maynard. New York: Robert M. McBride Co.

²"The Roamer and Other Poems." George Edward Woodberry. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Howe.

THE title under which Mr. E. V. Lucas harnesses his latest collection of essays, "Adventures and Enthusiasms," suggests an intensity which is seldom substantiated in the text. These sketches move at a jogging pace, guided by a slack rein, and rarely touched by the whip of fancy. Mr. Lucas believes in life, liberty, and the pursuit of parentheses; he is as dependent upon commas as Henry James, but without an equivalent justification. After all, punctuation is a privilege and like all privileges capable of abuse. One suspects that Mr. Lucas dictates his essays, for they are so cumbered with an endless shifting of phraseological adjustment, of minute restatement in terms of inconsequent facility. The selective function of the artist—the obligation to choose the real right word, and suppress its cousins—is forgone in the indulgence of profusion. More often than not, this weakness results in a needless congestion:

I, for example, who once had long passages not only from the great poets, but also from the less great but often more intimate poets,—such as Matthew Arnold and William Cory, to mention two favourites,—at the tip of the tongue, now have to recite myself to sleep with a Bab Ballad.

Occasionally, Mr. Lucas overloads his sentences to the point of actual gawkiness:

For some time the old man had been missing from his accustomed haunts, through blindness, and Death found him at his home at Chandon-Lagache, in the midst of the composition of rhymes about his little friends, which had long been his hobby, and took him quite peacefully.

At this date, it is no longer necessary to dwell upon this essayist's geniality, which is quite as firmly imbedded in tradition as Barrie's "whimsicality." Nor is it necessary to chronicle that the themes herein evoked are placid and inoffensive—ranging all the way from innocence to aunts, from punctuality to epitaphs. "Adventures and Enthusiasms" will take its place on the already well-crowded five-foot shelf of fireside favourites.

L. B.

"THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS" is a very good book.² Dr. Pratt knows his subject and he knows how to write about it. Books on religion have an irresistible tendency to heaviness, especially when they are written by professors. But there is hardly a dull page in the nearly five hundred of this volume. Moreover, Professor Pratt sticks to his text. He sets out to give us a description of the religious consciousness as he sees it, and he does so in a resolutely systematic fashion, never falling into the temptation of preaching or allowing himself to be drawn down any of the thousand and one seductive by-paths of speculation that he passes by the way. Perhaps the most valuable quality of the book is its quiet sanity. The psychologists are just now in danger of being stampeded by the Freud mania. The Freudian obsession obtrudes itself so impudently and cocksurely into so much writing nowadays that it is reassuring to have a dispassionate evaluation of the contribution that it has made to the knowledge of "our buried life," as Matthew Arnold called it. Dr. Pratt gives Freud and his followers full credit for the pioneering work that they have done, but he sees, as most unprejudiced students do, that their generalizations are at present far in excess of their data. Even Freud's own latest addition to the literature of psychoanalysis is full of large affirmations that are hardly to be justified by the evidence he adduces. In Dr. Pratt's treatment of mysticism, the same careful discrimination is conspicuous. He makes the important and necessary distinction between the milder forms of mysticism and the more accentuated,—a separation which makes for a much better understanding of the subject. The whole treatment of this part of the religious consciousness is admirable; and the final emphasis upon the importance of the "contemplative life" is especially to the point at a time when we are all in danger of losing our souls in an excess of business. The book has moreover the great value of being a very able and just *résumé* of the best current opinion on the subject. Not that Dr. Pratt is a mere eclectic. On the contrary, he has his own convictions; but though he holds his convictions strongly, they do not prevent him from doing justice—and perhaps sometimes a little more—to views from which he is constrained to dissent. It should not be left unsaid that Dr. Pratt brings to his study the resources of an enviably wide scholarship; and it would be difficult to recall a single recent work of importance upon the subject with which the writer is not acquainted. While the volume brings us nothing strikingly new, it is without doubt the best presentation at present available, of the field with which it deals.

R. R.

¹ "Adventures and Enthusiasms." E. V. Lucas. New York: George H. Doran Co.

² "The Religious Consciousness." James Bissett Pratt. New York: The Macmillan Co.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

A MANDARIN of the ninth degree, visiting this country, might perhaps be inclined to suggest that American literature is at present at the soft-shell stage of adolescence, that it consists of an army of exceedingly tender egos. In China, he might tell us, an artist is a person whose spirit has become universal and who, accordingly, when he expresses himself, expresses the universal. And he might add that the great campaign of "self-expression" that engrosses America is singularly lacking in universality. These earnest candidates for literature, I can imagine him saying, seek to express themselves, no doubt, but do they succeed? And even when they do succeed, is what they express sufficiently universal to be entitled to the name of literature? Such are the comments, I say, a grave and learned mandarin might make. And I, for one, should find it difficult to contradict his doubts.

LITERATURE, in the proper sense, is, without question, universal. "Who touches this book," said Whitman, "touches a man." But this man, in "Leaves of Grass," is not quite the same as the man revealed, let us say, in Horace Traubel's biography. The pomposity, the triviality, the trickery, the complacency of the old mystagogue of Camden have dropped away from the poet who sings the "Songs of Myself"; what emerges from the symphony of his words is the majestic spirit that broods over America with healing in his wings. What was the man Whitman? A product of conditions, a victim of innumerable complexes, an *homme incompris* with a chip on each shoulder: one can see him clearly enough in his conversation and his unconsidered prose. But of this nothing appears in his verse or in his prefaces. And that is why other men, who are the products of other conditions than Whitman's and the victims of different complexes, find themselves reflected there. The personal characteristics of the man remain, of course, but they have passed, I do not undertake to say how, through a singular transmutation. His grievances have ceased to be simply one man's grievances, they have become our grievances, his lusts have become our lusts, his pride no longer excites our contempt, but makes us proud as well. Something, in short, has happened to the man in the process of becoming a poet. Through an especially powerful faculty he has transcended what is merely personal in him: he is in *rapport* with reality, the quick to which we also thrill. He is expressing himself, to be sure, but it is a self that has become universal.

Now how about our "army of exceedingly tender egos"? I can only say that I, as a member of the more or less sensitive public, do not respond to most of the poems and stories that come under the category of "self-expression." (Heaven knows, I respond still less to the stories and poems that express nothing but herd-emotion and a study of technique.) One reads many of the strange experiments in the *Dial* and the *Little Review*, for example (many, by no means all) with a sense of nothing but confusion and bafflement. Very seldom does one seem to detect insincerity in these pieces: they are plainly honest experiments. But I, for one, fail to find my own life, my own experience, my own emotions expressed in them. To me, therefore, they are not literature.

LIKE everyone else who cares for literature, I have puzzled a good deal about this. One feels not simply that these writers are engaged in a serious enterprise but that they are conducting as it were a laboratory in which the American literature of the future is going to be forged. There is something in this nebula that seems to promise an ultimate coherence. Meanwhile, perceiving that these pieces do not express me and accepting the protestations of their authors that these pieces do not fully express them, I have studied them, seeking to read between the

lines. And as I have studied them, a secret cipher, a concealed watermark as it were has emerged upon these pages. I seem to see stories behind them: what do they tell me?

THIS man tells me the tale of his childhood: he had a too fond mother. This girl grew up in Kenosha, Wisconsin: something has prevented her from making a career for herself on the stage. This young person is a German by birth: he has been harried by the war. This one has a grievance against the police, that one a grudge against the rich, a third has always wanted to see Europe and has not been able to do so, a fourth was obliged to sing too many hymns in his infancy, a fifth was once insulted by an Englishman, a sixth was upset by the prohibition amendment, a seventh has read too many times "What a Young Girl Ought to Know," an eighth has never found anyone to love him, a ninth has found so many to love him that he has no energy for anything else, a tenth is convinced that he ought to have been God. All these complexes begin to tumble out of their boxes, and as they tumble I perceive what "self-expression" means. These writers are unbosoming themselves of difficulties that should never have been theirs, that never would have been theirs if they had not been brought up by the great mother of complexes—our own dyspeptic America. American literature, I perceive, has become as it were, like the shrine of Lourdes, a repository of the sighs and the crutches of the maimed.

I, OF course, have my grievances, too. But it just happens that they are not the particular grievances of the authors in question. I did not grow up in Kenosha, I was not obliged to sing hymns in my infancy, I am not a victim of "What a Young Girl Ought to Know." Inevitably, therefore, my response to these effusions is somewhat cool and curious. In fact, no two of us have quite the same grievances, the same complexes: consequently, these effusions are, in a sense, "flights of the alone to the alone." And that is just the difficulty. To me, I say, they are not literature, because they do not express me. But they are not literature to you, either, for they do not express you. They do not even express their authors: they merely permit the truth about their authors to leak through in a way their authors never intended. Is that literature?

BUT at any rate, you say, you like them, you sympathize with them; they give you a fellow-feeling. Quite a different question, of course; but there I fully agree with you, I am simply trying to establish distinctions. I have a fellow-feeling for the victims of our preposterous society: what draws me to this Valley of Jehoshaphat, moreover, is a belief that the bones will have to be assembled before we can expect to ascend into heaven. We are reaping the whirlwind of the industrial system. And think of the repulsive religious background of a nation that has been given over for centuries to the irrational rigours of evangelical Protestantism! Every race of mankind has been drawn to these shores only to be flung headlong into the chopper of a puritanical commercialism; every human instinct has been outraged in the process, and now the blind, the maimed and the halt have come forth again into the sunlight. Such a rubbing of eyes, such an exhibition of sores! But who can fairly wish it otherwise? There never was such a population as ours for grievances and grudges and chips on the shoulder. But grievances can not be cured until they are aired, until we become conscious of them, and we can not become conscious of them until we have tried to put them into words. Ours is a generation of rebels: it could not have been anything else.

BUT let us preserve our sense of distinctions. Literature is self-expression, but it is the expression of a self that has undergone what Ibsen called "purification." It is

not the voice of a rebellion against things: it is the voice of a rebellion against oneself and against things only in so far as they correspond with those elements in oneself that hinder one's growth. Literature cries out against the rule of matter, against tyranny and economic injustice and religious obscurantism because they thwart the human spirit: it is because literature does so that literature is universal. All men realize themselves vicariously in the writer. But the passion of the writer becomes universal through being directed against his own response to these phenomena. He, as a man, is himself the tyrant, the victim of matter, the obscurantist: that is what Ibsen implies in the following lines:

Everything that I have written has the closest possible connexion with what I have lived through, even if it has not been my own personal experience; in every new play or poem I have aimed at my own spiritual emancipation and purification—for a man shares the responsibility and the guilt of the society to which he belongs. Hence, I once wrote the following dedicatory lines in a copy of one of my books:

To live is to war with fiends
That infest the brain and the heart;
To write is to summon oneself
And play the judge's part.

It is by struggling, in short, with those elements in himself that are precisely personal, "human, all-too-human," that the writer achieves his freedom—and achieves literature. Rebellion against things alone is, in the writer, merely the expression of a neurosis.

"I AM convinced by long observation and experiment," says Mr. Matthias Alexander, who might have been writing of this adolescent literature of ours "that the untrained child has not the adequate power of free expression. There are certain mechanical and other laws," (his precise theme is free dancing) "deduced from untold centuries of human experience, laws that are only in the rarest cases unconsciously followed by the natural child of to-day." What is true of dancing is certainly also true of writing. There may exist some country where an ancient culture is combined with immemorial habits of personal freedom, a country where tradition has flowed along in a pure stream unchecked by the inhibitions of a savage mythology and a life of trade, and where, in consequence, the spontaneous gesture is also the universal one.

BUT that is Arcadia, it is not America. The free gesture in America is, nine times out of ten, the gesture that reveals everything that is not universal, the foot that has been cramped by generations of ugly shoes, the soul that has been deformed by generations of ugly living. "We must build up, co-ordinate and readjust the human machine," says Mr. Alexander, "so that it may be *in tune*." And what is true of the body is true also of the spirit. We can not, in America, achieve literature by expressing the selves that we at present possess, however good it may be, as a therapeutic measure, to express them. We must "build up" those selves, "co-ordinate and readjust" them. Not till then will our "free" expression be universal also.

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"Steeplejack," by James Huneker. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The Life of Robert Owen," by himself. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

"The Idea of Progress," by J. B. Bury. New York: The Macmillan Co.

"Memoirs of the Empress Eugenie," edited by Comte Fleury. New York: Appleton & Co.

"Cashmere," three weeks in a houseboat, by A. Petrocokino. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

"Science and Life," by Frederick Soddy. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

There is more ado to interpret interpretations than to interpret the things, and more books upon books than upon all other subjects; we do nothing but comment upon one another.

AND yet, M. de MONTAIGNE, though almost four hundred years have passed since you wrote those words, we are still at it, and when a descendant of Macaulay's New Zealander, some four hundred years from now, forgets his dinner because fascinated by a file of the FREEMAN in the British Museum or some other good library, he will say, "Strange, how this book-reviewing habit has persisted through the ages."

MAN hungers for interpretation; that is why he goes to church, to lectures, to concerts. That is why he reads editorials. That is why he not only tolerates but encourages book-reviews. Realizing this inherent demand for analysis and exposition, the FREEMAN lays special emphasis on its editorials and its book-reviews. How successfully it achieves its end we leave to our readers to say but, if you are one of those who write us complimentary letters, we suggest that you now sit down and write a similar note to a good friend.

AND—a mere trifle, but an important one—you might send him the form printed below.

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